COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY

Managing Anxiety, Depression Eating Disorders and Panic Attacks CBT Workbook

HAZEL JOSH

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Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

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Hazel Josh

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Introduction

The following chapters will discuss what is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, the methods, and techniques as well as what you can do to help when you know someone who is undergoing therapy.

You will discover how important CBT is in helping many psychological disorders such as anxiety, eating disorders, sleep deprivation, marital discord, and panic attacks.

This book also looks at how CBT is used to treat anxiety and eating disorders. Finally, this book will also explore available treatments and resources that you can get help from, whether it is for your own self or for someone you know who needs help.

The exciting aspects of CBT are that this method and its various forms of treatment can be used by therapists to treat patients and it can also be used by people who want to gain better aspects of managing life, their thoughts, creating a positive mindset, and also to overcome negative thinking.

This book is specifically geared towards beginners who want to learn about CBT and also how to administer some of these exercises on their own.

Chapter 1 - Understanding CBT

Cognitive Behavior Therapy, otherwise known as CBT, is a present-oriented, time-sensitive, and structured psychotherapy that is aimed at teaching people skills to modify their dysfunctional thinking and behavior. Its objective is to solve current problems and focus on our thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs that affect our feelings and behavior. It also aims to teach patients and other people some coping skills that are needed for dealing with different problems.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy is an integration of behavioral therapy and cognitive therapy. It examines the things you think and the things you do. While this may sound simple, in reality, CBT is a deep-reaching and systematic approach in getting our emotional balance right and helping patients with disorders live a better and emotionally stable life.

How does CBT work?

The theory behind CBT is to think about the situations that could affect the way we behave and the way we feel. When we are faced with an adverse situation, it is natural to experience negative emotions, and these feelings may lead to negative behavioral reactions. CBT looks at the way an individual distinguishes a scenario and how this perception has more to do with their personal reactions rather than the extent of the scenario itself.

CBT aims to help people change or alter their own destructive thinking and behavior that would hopefully, lead to an improvement in their mood and daily functioning. CBT involves plenty of problems-solving, and it borrows many psychotherapeutic techniques from dialectical behavior therapy, commitment and acceptance therapy, compassion-focused therapy, Gestalt therapy, and mindfulness and motivational interviewing.

The History of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

This therapy was created in the 1960s by psychiatrist Aaron Temkin Beck. At the time, Beck was conducting psychoanalysis and observed during these sessions that his patients were inclined to have internal dialogues in their minds. However, they reported only a small fraction of this thinking to him.

The thoughts that the patients went through would make them feel a variety of negative emotions from anxiety, fear, annoyance, and sadness. After a series of research and tests, Beck concluded that there was a link between feelings and thoughts, and this was an unexplored territory in human thinking and behavior. Knowing that this was an important relationship, Beck coined the word ‘Automatic Thoughts’ to explain the thoughts filled in emotions that automatically pops in people’s minds every now and then.

Beck’s research found that humans didn’t always know of these thoughts, but they have learn to somehow identify and report them. Many of us are not aware of plenty of the things we do and say but when it comes to negative interactions and scenarios, our minds tend to exaggerate our thinking to the point where it creates more issues and problems.

For example, if someone was feeling upset, their thoughts are usually negative, and these thoughts are not only helpful but not realistic as well. Identifying these thoughts, according to Beck, was vital to understand what a patient is going through and what can be done to help them overcome this mental difficulty.

Beck called this cognitive therapy because this correlation had an importance in the way we thought. In modern medicine, it is known as cognitive-behavioral therapy, because of the importance of techniques for behavior techniques as well.

CBT has been tried and tested under many successful trials scientifically in many locations and by different groups. CBT has been tested in wide range of problems, and while cognitive and behavioral elements are different from the therapies used, it all comes under the umbrella of CBT.

Who Benefits from undergoing CBT?

If you are vaguely unhappy or unfulfilled, CBT isn't for you. CBT benefits the people who have particular problems, have troubling symptoms, or want to work on a particular aspect of their lives. CBT can help people with these problems by using a problem-solving approach and practical self-assignments. CBT can be utilized for people with the following challenges:

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- eating problems
- drug or alcohol problems
- depression
- chronic pain
- chronic fatigue syndrome
- general health problems
- panic attacks
- anxiety attacks
- Sleep issues
- anger management
- mood swings
- child and adolescent problems
- incessant habits
- OCD
- Extreme phobias

Is CBT for me?

CBT is not for everyone. The only way to know if you require CBT is to meet a therapist. A trained and experienced therapist will be able to identify what issues you are facing and if you need any form of therapy or not. It usually depends on the disorder you have and the severity of it. Often, the individual

would be taken for a series of counseling sessions to properly identify the issues they have and if it does require medical or clinical intervention.

Getting self-help books is not helpful unless you know what you have. Self-help books only work as an additional treatment to your current therapy. The bottom line is if you are not sure what you have, visit a therapist and get a consultation.

The Future of CBT

CBT is a relatively new but rapidly growing line of psychoanalysis and behavioral therapy. More and more health practitioners and therapists use a combination of medication and CBT to help people suffering from delusions, hallucinations and other mental illnesses.

In the next few chapters, we will look at the various forms of CBT, supplementary treatments as well as other issues concerning CBT.

Chapter 2 - Cognitive Distortions

Whenever you feel stressed or worried, do you notice the kind of thoughts that occupy your mind? Usually when we go through stress or sadness, worry or fear, our thoughts are filled with negativity.

What are Cognitive Distortions?

There is a strong relationship between what we feel and what we think. Whenever we feel challenged or unhappy, our thoughts become dramatic and absolute, and it usually goes along the lines of feeling ‘I am stupid and unworthy’ or ‘I don’t fit in’ or ‘nobody likes me.' These types of thoughts are recognized as ‘cognitive distortions, ’ and it is a term in psychology that describes the way we are thinking about something that doesn’t match up to the extent of the reality that is going on.

Why Are Cognitive Distortions So Important To Understand?

Cognitive distortions are an element of extreme thinking, and they often lead a person into a negative cycle. This can make anyone spiral further and further down into a whole series of negativity, until they feel there is no way out or no solution or end to their problems. Distorted thinking is very common among people who suffer from negative issues such as low-self esteem or mood swings and anxiety.

When a thought affects your bodily sensations and your feelings, this

combination then dictates your behavior. Your behavior then triggers your next thought which then creates another cycle of negativity.

It is an ongoing loop that goes on and on, and each cycle leads to an even more destructive negative thought. For example, you go to a party and see the girl you want to talk to. Before you can even approach her to say hello, you are already processing the many different things that could go wrong. You start thinking ‘What if she doesn’t like me’ or ‘What if she snubs me.' This negative thinking then makes you start feeling anxious and self-conscious (feelings), and then it makes your body react by excessively sweating and your heart beating fast (bodily sensations). Because these negative feelings have overcome you, you abandon all desire to speak to that girl. You retreat to a quiet place and don’t talk to anyone. You feel left out of the party and alienated which then produces another negative thought, “Is there something wrong with me? Why doesn’t anyone like me?” (Behavior)

This starts the cycle all over again.

Cognitive distortions determine the number of CBT therapists that work with you to change your moods and alter the way you think. CBT therapists help you to recognize the moment when you think distorted thoughts, and they also help train yourself to replace these thoughts with more balanced and positive thoughts. While this sounds simple, the process to get there is not. Negative thoughts are a strong habit, and it is deeply rooted in a person’s unconscious mind that it sometimes can be perceived as normal.

Changing negative thinking is a robust process of focused work and attention, but with the therapist’s help, a patient is steered in the right direction.

How to Recognize Cognitive Distortions

It may be you or someone you know who have these distortions, so it would help to try to recognize these signs. Here are ten of the most common distortion traits:

Mental Filter

Mental filtering relates to how a person focuses, whether consciously or subconsciously, to the most negative and upsetting feature in a situation. When they think this way, they filter out positive aspects of that situation. For example, you had a night out with friends and the very next day, suffer from a hangover. Your entire mood goes downhill because you are too focused on your hangover even to think that it is a result of a fantastic night out with friends. You convince yourself that you feel too sick and that you will not participate in future events. This levels you not recognizing the fun times of last night and the enjoyment that you felt.

Disqualifying the positive

This happens when we continuously dismiss and discount positive experiences that we encounter and instead, choose to dwell on details that are negative. We decide that the positive experiences are not important or don't count. For example, an acquaintance comes over to your work table and compliments you on the sweater you are wearing, and instead of feeling good or pleasant, you decide that they are nice just to get something out of you.

Always or Nothing

This type of thinking is when we view things only in black and white. It

is either a never, an always or an every. Everything you see is either good or bad or a failure, and more often than not, it is usually the negative perception that is pushed forward, whereas everything in the gray area is discounted. For example, you score 90 percent on your driving test but get sad and think you are a bad drive because you didn't score 100 percent.

Over-generalization

Over-generalizing refers to how we often perceive a single unpleasant incident or event as proof that everything else will be the same awful and negative experience, and how it is a sign that everything around will go wrong. For example, if you fail at an exam, you immediately think that you are never going to pass. Or you might even go for a job interview and fail badly at it and think you are never going to get a job.

Jumping to Conclusions

A person that jumps to conclusions is very inclined to make a negative prediction that the worst is yet to come even though there is no evidence to support their assumption. This thinking materializes from what we think other feels towards us. People like this often act like mind readers. They assume the thoughts and intentions of others or they also act like fortune tellers anticipating the worst.

For example, you are giving a pitch presentation, and you already know (fortune-telling) that you'll end up failing. Or you are going to a party and do not like the dress you are wearing, because you think everyone is going to hate it (mind-reading).

Magnifying or Minimizing

Thinking either in a minimizing or magnifying way is a kind of thinking where we exaggerate the importance of negative events and downplay the positive events. People who are depressed often exaggerate the positive characteristics of other people and the negative ones are downplayed. It is the reverse when we think of our own selves. When we exaggerate a situation, we are unable to see other ways or outcomes except the worst one. For example, you wrongly sent an email out to a client, and you exaggerate the worst by thinking 'I'm about to lose my job now. My house and car won't now be paid. I'm going to lose my house. I will no longer have a place to live.'

Personalization

Personalization in the cognitive disorders refers to a situation when a person automatically thinks a bad thing or negative event has happened because of him or her. They assume responsibility and blame for things that are above and beyond their control and they feel guilt, shame, and inadequacy. For example, there was a burglary in your house, and you immediately assume responsibility and say it is your fault because you didn't install proper locks or can't remember if you ever locked your gates and doors when you went out. You'd probably be thinking 'if only I installed professional locks' or 'if only I subscribed to the neighborhood watch.'

Should Have, Must have or Ought to have Thinking

Individuals who think this way often have a very rigid view and a set of rules that can arouse the feeling of anger, resentment, frustration, guilt as well as disappointment with their constant thinking of 'Should' 'Ought' and 'Must.' For instance, your daughter doesn't like playing the piano, but you put her in classes anyway because you feel that she should learn it and when she makes mistakes, you think that her teacher 'ought' to be stricter on her.

Emotional Reasoning

This kind of thinking relates to when we assume that our feelings reflect the fact, whether or not there's evidence. The basis of this is 'I feel it, which means it has to be true.' This kind of thinking often leads to self-fulfilling prophecies and our thoughts often end up promoting the very behavior we predicted, all because we changed our behavior in line with that specific thought. For example, if you think 'I feel stupid and useless, therefore I must be stupid and useless.' This might cause you not to learn new things or read more books even though you are a bright person and very resourceful.

Labeling

An individual with this kind of thinking usually assigns a negative and very emotive label on themselves and even others, with no room of change. This label is automatically given the minute something goes wrong or is done wrong.

For example, you send out a newsletter, and there is a spelling error. Immediately, you think 'I am so stupid and careless' instead of thinking 'It's a mistake and I will not let it happen again'. This person can also label someone else automatically. For instance, your friend made an error in a computer program and you quickly say 'You are so incompetent'.

Do you suffer from Cognitive Distortions?

Sometimes, we all end up becoming negative, especially when we are not

focused or become too stressed. It is a normal human behavior to experience these emotions but people with cognitive distortions often exhibit these behaviors too often and is usually destructive to themselves and the people around them. If you feel you or someone you know has any of these types of thoughts, don’t panic. Instead, realize that you can overcome this pattern or thinking. Realization is halfway to the path of change. It would be good for you to monitor when and how often you experience these distortions and in what kind of situations do they occur.

The Effectiveness of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

People who undergo CBT can expect to reduce their emotional disorder systems substantially. CBT can also be considered to be as good as the other medicinal therapies like depression and anxiety. With CBT though, the benefits last longer unlike drug treatments because once drug treatments finish, patients can relapse and that would mean they need to continue their medication longer or in higher doses.

Clinical trials on CBT have shown that results are long lasting for more than two years and sometimes, permanent. Twelve sessions of CBT has been proven to help in tackling depression compared to taking medication.

CBT has also been proven to bring about significant and real change that goes beyond feeling good. Apart from the standard CBT treatments, social skills training as well as short-term psychological training, has been effective when combined with CBT. The ultimate goal is to make all these various interventions and therapies as effective as possible as well as to see which treatment the patient best responds to.

Make no mistake by thinking CBT is the be-all-end-all miracle cure for emotional and mental disorders. Clients attending CBT sessions need to be open, persistent, and be prepared to share things with the therapist. There are no clear-cut problems with clear-cut solutions when it comes to psychoanalysis. In the next few chapters, we will look in the various treatments and therapies administered in CBT, where to find help, and what kind of exercises that can be done on your own to help deal with negative emotions and feelings as well as situations.

Chapter 3 - Types of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

There are several different types of CBT applied for various age groups and various behavioral issues. Therapy will be adjusted and altered accordingly to the specific needs of the patient that the therapist is dealing. Therapists look at the background of the patient, their strengths and weaknesses, as well as their individual preferences for treatment.

Below are some common types of CBT that are employed by most therapists:

1. Behavior Therapy (BT)

Behavior therapy is the new approach to modern treatment. Among all CBT methods, behavior therapy was the first to be scientifically proven. Behavioral therapy is the science of learning how we react emotionally, cognitively, and behaviorally, which provides the basis of all modern CBT. Behavior therapy is one of the most popular and widely practiced forms of CBT and used by renowned therapists such as Edna Foa from the University of Pennsylvania and David Barlow based at the Boston University.

Behavioral therapy uses primary intervention methods such as exposure response prevention. Behavioral therapy also continues to be an effective treatment for extreme depression. Forms of behavioral intervention include systematic desensitization, aversion therapy, and flooding. These intervention types suggest that a response is learned and repeated through immediate association. Behavioral therapies aim to shatter the relationship between stimulus and undesired response.

2. Cognitive Therapy

Cognitive Therapy, created by Aaron Beck, is among the primary forms

of therapy used around the world. Cognitive refers to thinking or knowing, so cognitive thinking is related to changing how we think. By altering the way we think, the idea is to change our behavioral and emotional reactions. Cognitive therapy uses interventions such as hypothesis testing, evidence-based thinking, prediction, and activity schedule. It also has scientifically proven results on anxiety disorders as well as depression, surpassing results far better than medication therapy. It also works on marital discord, phobias, eating disorders as well as personality disorders. CT should only be administered by organizations that have national credentials from the Academy of Cognitive Therapy.

3. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

CBT is the combination of the two therapies described above. This combination has also been scientifically proven to help combat a variety of disorders. When administered by trained and experienced CBT therapists, a patient receives the best of the two worlds, modern medicine and successful interventions.

4. Third Wave CBT

Third Wave CBT is a common name used to explain other related sections of CBT which shares similar interests in wanting to continue the scientific and behavioral elements of CBT. The Third Wave has developed more from the traditional interventions of CBT and the emphasis with regards to changing and controlling symptoms and disorders. The third Wave explores the effects of mindfulness and acceptance as an alternative to over-control. Also, rather than emphasizing the symptoms and disorders, it focuses more on the wellness.

5. Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)

The ACT is considered a third generation CBT method. It uses the fundamentals of CBT except with the ACT; it explores in more detail the role of acceptance in an individual’s cognitive and emotional conundrum. ACT emphasizes the body’s knowledge as a method of learning what illogically happens when we try extremely hard to control our inner emotions and our thoughts. The exercises for mindfulness are also used to re-experience the

acceptance of our inner states. The use of mindfulness exercises is increased in ACT because many emotional disorders have the possibility of becoming worse when attempts of over control, compulsiveness, and compensation are used. Apart from mindfulness exercises, ACT also incorporates present orientation, values exploration, the non-literal experience of our thoughts as well as the expanded experience and definition of our self. Created by Steven Hates, ACT ensures that acceptance and mindfulness are integrated scientifically to psychotherapy theory.

6. Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Also referred to as DBT, this method was created by Marsha Linehan to be used to treat very complex and intractable personality disorders, suicidal symptoms, and impulsive disorders. This method works best for personality problems at the range from complicated to chronic. With DBT, patients encouraged to confront and make peace with the truths that appear in many situations that they face. This makes the patient accept them or change themselves. DBT is an approach based on skills which urges us to balance our objective and emotional personalities. It also employs mindfulness and using this mindfulness awareness via other DBT skill sets such as emotion regulations, distress tolerance, and interpersonal skills. Personality disorders are not the only forms of issues that can be treated with DBT. In fact, anxiety, depression, explosive anger, eating disorders, and substance abuse have all been successfully treated with DBT.

7. Functional Analytic Psychotherapy

Known as FAP, this is a very interpersonal therapy that is also used to treat a variety of disorders. It also promotes people on how to better approach challenging situations in their life with courage and care. FAP encourages the therapist as well as the client in utilizing the time in their sessions to raise the awareness of being mindful of behaviors as well as to notice how and where these behaviors work and where it does not. Patients are highly encouraged to open their emotions and therapists are encouraged to find a caring way of maintaining and encouraging purposeful behavior that continues even after the sessions with their patients.

8. Compassion Informed Psychotherapy

This therapy employs empirical and scientific information concerning how the brain works. Compassion Focused Therapy takes advantage of scientific and empirical data and integrates it into interpersonal therapies, which are practiced and developed to form special social-emotional intelligence to treat depression and anxiety.

9. Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy

This therapy is based on the mindfulness kinds of treatments like the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction by Jon Kabbat-Zinn's. This kind of treatment has seen impressive scientific results when used to treat conditions such as hypertension, gastrointestinal disorders, chronic pain, and other medical disorders. The goal of MBCT is to change both our thoughts' content and our reactions to it. It uses methods that help the person mindfully distance his self from negative thoughts, encourage more awareness on how the patient make judgments to his thoughts, and how the tendency relates to having what they call "secondary emotions." The powerful combination of mindfulness and compassionate elements allow patients to break the vicious cycle of negativity by teaching them to continually refocus their thoughts into making positive choices to improve their daily lives every minute of every day.

10. Integrative Couples Behavior Therapy

This type of therapy was developed at the University of Washington's Love Lab by Neil Jacobsen and Andrew Christensen. This therapy integrates the best scientific principles related to how couples behavior changes and best possible conflict resolutions. The objective of this therapy is to ensure that there is acceptance between partners on their sensitivities and traits. The therapy uses various communication tools such as empathic listening, character readings on how partners love and hate each other, and it also changes couples expectations and assumptions of each other. There is also brainstorming, hypothesis testing, and problem definition in this therapy that aims to revisit the results of experiments, and using what has been learned through each session.

Chapter 4 - Ten Psychological Problems Best Treated by Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT)

As explained in earlier chapters, CBT is a combination of both behavioral and cognitive therapies and it has strong factual support for treating several psychological disorders. The fundamental premise of CBT focuses on the premise that negative emotions cannot be altered directly, which is why it targets behaviors and thoughts that result in distressing emotions.

CBT is geared towards building a person's individual coping skills or their individual skill set that enables them to be more aware of their feelings and their thoughts, be better equipped to identify thoughts, situations and behaviors, and how this impacts someone's feelings and improves the negative feelings by altering dysfunctional behaviors and thoughts.

CBT is different from traditional forms of therapy because CBT emphasizes a patient's skill acquisition and it also uses homework assignments. The ultimate goal for CBT is not only to solve a patient's existing problems but also improve on the negative feelings that they experience and build their toolkit so that they are much better equipped to solving problems when it happens.

In this chapter, we will look into the 10 of the most common psychological issues that CBT can be used as a treatment method.

- **Depression**

A technique called behavior activation is mainly used to help patients who suffer depression. The therapist uses behavior activation to work with the patient in reintroducing pleasant events into the client's life and this ultimately helps improve the patient's mood by increasing physical activity, reversing avoidance, increasing self-confidence as well as increases the feelings of purposefulness and usefulness. It also reduces negative thoughts. This type of treatment can actually be used to activate many different types of behaviors but the most common one used is to reintroduce happy thoughts and pleasant activities as well as coping behaviors that will reduce some life stressors such as

cleaning a messy apartment, filling debts and taxes as well as meeting or calling an estranged family member.

- **Panic Disorder**

CBT is employed differently when it comes to panic disorders. With depression, it is about reintroducing happy and pleasant scenarios but with panic disorders, it is quite the opposite. CBT reintroduces or exposes the patient to a situation that they fear most. These exposure sessions assist the client in learning that they can experience elements of arousal minus the fear of consequences. This treatment allows the patient to confront any physical sensations that they experience which is associated with panic, but without allowing themselves to spiral into a panic attack. For example, hyperventilation or even bodily spinning could be used as part of the exposure treatment to induce the feeling of lightheadedness or dizziness.

When imagining exposure, the therapist reads aloud from a script of the feared situation to the patient over and over until the patient's anxiety symptoms reduce.

This type of treatment is used to help patients decrease their tendency to avoid situations that often result in a panic attack. Sometimes, the therapist also creates a series of challenging situations and works with the patient to gradually go through them step-by-step. Patients will eventually develop the right attitude needed to deliberately go out and confront their most difficult situations.

- **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)**

CBT is currently the preferred treatment for OCD and this is done in weekly sessions that include Exposure and Response/Ritual prevention (ERP) exercises. Exposure and response prevention is when the patient first exposes themselves to the images, objects, thoughts or situations that make them feel anxious and begins their obsessions. This is the exposure phase. Patients then resist doing a compulsive behavior when these obsessions have been triggered. This is the response prevention phase. This reduces the feeling of anxiety and also reduces compulsions.

- **Bipolar Disorder**

Most patients who have Bipolar disorder are prescribed with medication, which is usually mood stabilizers but research has found that CBT has a profound effect on a patient's recovery rate and is a good addition to pharmacotherapy. For Bipolar disorder, CBT focuses on psychoeducation as well as mood regulation. Psychoeducation focuses on educating the patient on the disorder that they have as well as its consequences, the medication involved and its side effects and the symptoms and early warning signs of a bipolar episode. CBT also helps the patient track and identify their mood changes as well as reduce any emotional reactivity through mindfulness exercises, breathing, distraction as well as self-soothing activities.

- **Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**

As with bipolar, the first arsenal of ADHD is also medication but in this case, psychostimulants. However, medication alone is not enough to treat ADHD. Combined with CBT, there are two goals, i.) to help patients work on coping skills to manage their symptoms and ii.) deal with their functional and emotional effects of living with ADHD. An extremely successful technique used for clients with ADHD is problem-solving. In this aspect, patients are encouraged to give real-life examples of certain problems that project their difficulties and together with the therapist, they work together to find solutions that are suitable for their problems. It is also extremely important for the patient and therapist to anticipate possible problems that could arrive and develop solutions to solve or plans to manage them.

- **Social Phobia/Social Anxiety**

In finding solutions to social phobias, therapists skilled in CBT help patients to create new patterns of thinking and behaving by encouraging positive and realistic thinking in order to replace unrealistic and negative thinking. In these scenarios, cognitive restructuring is extremely crucial especially for people with social anxiety, as they are not only taught to form new patterns but also learn to challenge and question the truth in their beliefs. It can all be achieved by providing evidence against beliefs that are problematic. Behavioral experiments are extremely crucial to show patients that disastrous events that are predicted by irrational beliefs do not actually happen when exposure exercises are done. Patients are shown the falseness of their beliefs.

- **Bulimia Nervosa**

CBT is usually employed as a treatment for bulimia because at the core of this disorder is the negative over-concern with one's body weight and shape which ultimately leads to the patient's extreme dieting and unhealthy weight-control behaviors. With CBT treatment, the therapist focuses on enhancing the motivation to change and also replacing dieting with flexible and regular patterns of eating, decreasing the concern with their body and weight as well as preventing relapses from happening. CBT is a much more effective and acceptable form of treatment than antidepressant medication. CBT has been shown to effectively remove purging and binge eating in about half of the bulimia cases, and it also decreases the level of associated psychiatric symptoms that come with bulimia such as improving self-esteem and social functioning.

- **Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)**

CBT effectively reduces the primary symptoms of anxiety as well as depressive symptoms and eventually improving the quality of life for the patient. An effective technique that CBT uses in treating GAD is relaxation training. Patients go through sessions with a therapist to learn how to reduce their muscle tension as well as shallow breathing because both of these elements are linked to anxiety and stress. The two main strategies employed in CBT are the Progressive Muscle Relaxation which involves systematically relaxing and tensing muscle groups, and Paced Respiration which involves consciously slowing down your breathing. Other helpful relaxation strategies include yoga, listening to calm music, meditation and massage.

- **Schizophrenia**

CBT is currently the preferred and recommended treatment for schizophrenia and is commonly used together with medications. The patient discovers that there is a link between their thinking patterns and their feelings that promote their distress. With CBT, the therapist also focuses on identifying and disputing a client's irrational beliefs using guided sessions of discovery and behavioral experiments. These experiments are helpful because it engages the client in several situations where they can test their validation on specific beliefs as well as discover that these beliefs are not accurate.

These experiments engage the clients in active ways that conventional verbal therapy cannot accomplish, and this creates a deeper level of information processing.

- **Fear of Flying/Flying Phobia**

While CBT is an extremely effective treatment for all types of phobias, the fear of flying seems to be the most common phobias that CBT can effectively treat. In CBT, one of the most crucial components is psychoeducation, and it is complimented with relaxation training, imaginal exposure, and cognitive techniques. Imaginal exposure is a type of exercise that makes the patient focus or imagine a situation where they are exposed to flying such as getting or sitting on a plane or helicopter. This will likely increase the anxiety of the patient in a short time. But through this exercise, they are encouraged to keep imagining this same situation over and over till their anxiety decreases, and they are able to handle a real-life situation in a much positive way.

Virtual reality exposure is also another form of therapy, and it is the latest in treatments. Patients are exposed to their phobia by using a 3D computer simulation of being airborne or in a plane. The principles of exposure work the same despite it using a high-tech, life-like environment.

Bottom line

While there are, CBT principles and its techniques can be used to cure various types of problems and issues faced by people. In any kind of stressful situation, relaxation skills are extremely useful whether it is taking a test, having sleep problems, road rate or arguing with a spouse.

Problem-solving strategies can be an extremely effective way to deal with these issues so anyone can benefit from a series of CBT sessions that focus on identifying and disputing irrational beliefs and look forward to experiencing fewer negative emotions in their life. CBT techniques are a useful addition to any psychological issue or phobia.

Chapter 5 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Anxiety

Anxiety is one of the most common emotional and psychological disorders plenty of people go through. It is very common to have feelings of anxiety, but for a large percentage of the world's population, anxiety can be chronic and complicated, to the point where it interferes with daily life.

How do you know if you have an anxiety disorder?

If you frequently suffer from obsessive thoughts, phobias, fear, panic attacks, and constant, unrelenting worry, the chances are that you have an anxiety disorder. The good news is that treatment can help and it can treat a variety of anxiety issues. As with many psychological issues, therapy is a good place to begin. Cognitive behavioral therapy is a very helpful method of treating anxiety.

Treating anxiety disorders with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Research has shown that therapy is the most effective forms of treatment when it comes to treating anxiety disorders. However, compared to anxiety medication, cognitive behavioral therapy has longer lasting effects, and above all, CBT treats much more than just the symptoms of the disorder. It also helps a patient uncover underlying issues that cause them to feel fear and worry.

CBT also teaches the patient to learn how to relax and look at situations that they are going through in a more positive and less frightening way. Along the way, patients are also taught better coping methods and problem-solving skills.

Anxiety disorders differ according to each person. There may be a few common traits that patients will share but generally, each of them experiences anxiety in different ways and in varying degrees, which is why therapy will be tailored to address the particular needs of each individual so that it can help their

symptoms and individualistic concerns.

The kind of anxiety disorder and the severity of it will determine how long the therapy would take. A patient with anxiety and OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) will have a different treatment compared to a patient with anxiety and ADHD for instance. While the length may vary, the American Psychological Association has reported that most patients show a significant improvement after eight to ten therapy sessions.

Cognitive behavioral therapy and exposure therapy are the leading approaches used to treat anxiety disorders. When it comes to treatments, a trained therapist would be able to use only one therapy alone or a combination of different types of therapy and, if necessary, medication as well.

Most often, therapy for anxiety is done individually. However, it can also be done to a group of people that has the same anxiety traits.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Anxiety

CBT used in anxiety disorder is usually focused on addressing the negative patients and cognitive distortions at how patients look at the world and how they view themselves.

This treatment focuses on two components:

- **Cognitive therapy** which analyzes the *cognitions* or negative thoughts that contributes to anxiety.

- **Behavior therapy** analyzes your behavior and reactions to the situations that triggers anxiety.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is used to explain to individuals that it is our thoughts, and not the events surrounding us, that affect the way we feel. So, it is actually all in our minds.

In other words, the situation doesn't determine our feelings and reactions, but it is our perception of the situation.

Here is an example of how we think and behave:

Scenario 1: You get invited to a party.

Thought #1 : I think the party will be fun. I love going out and meeting new people!

Feelings: Excited, happy

Thought #2: I don't really like parties. I prefer staying at home and watching movies.

Feelings: Neutral

Thought #3: I'm not very good at being and a party and having conversations.

No one will want to communicate with me if ever I go.

Feelings: Sad, anxious

The scenario above shows that one individual can go through different thoughts based on how they think. The same exact scenario can bring about different emotions for different people, depending on how they view that situation. It is entirely dependent on our expectations, our attitudes, and beliefs. A person with anxiety disorders often thinks negatively, and this negativity further fuels other negative emotions which lead to fear and anxiety. Cognitive behavioral therapy used in this situation will help the individual to identify these fears that come creeping into their minds and correct these negative beliefs and thoughts. The motive behind CBT here is to alter the way you think and ultimately change the way you feel.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: Thought Challenging

Thought challenging is also referred to as cognitive restructuring which is a process in which an individual is required to challenge the negative thinking patterns that bring about their anxiety. They then need to replace these thoughts with more realistic and positive thoughts.

The three steps in Thought Challenging are:

1. Identifying Your Negative Thoughts

People with anxiety disorders often see a condition to be very dangerous when they are actually not. For someone with claustrophobia, being in a small room like a closet might feel suffocating for them. To this person, they know this to be an irrational fear, but they cannot identify their own irrational thoughts. It is difficult for them. At this point, the strategy is to personally determine your thoughts when your anxiety starts to creep in. Your sessions with your therapist

will help you work on this step.

2. Challenging Your Negative Thoughts

The second step is evaluating your thoughts that provoke anxiety. This includes testing out the reality of negative predictions, analyzing contradicting beliefs, and finally, questioning the source of your frightening thoughts. Your therapist will be able to help you execute certain strategies to help you challenge these negative thoughts and these include conducting experiments on your negative predictions, listing out the pros and cons of the things that worry and cause fear for you and finally, determining the realistic probability of the situations that you are anxiously think might happen.

3. Replacing negative thoughts with realistic thoughts

Once you are able to identify these cognitive distortions and irrational predictions that result in your anxious thoughts, you are now able to replace them with positive and accurate beliefs and thoughts. Again, your therapist would be able to guide you in coming up with these realistic approaches using calming statements that you can use on yourself whenever you face a situation that makes you feel anxious.

How Thought Challenging Works in CBT

To understand the correlation between thought challenging and CBT, let us look at the example below:

Andrea will not take the elevator because of her fear of getting trapped in it and if anyone knows this, they will see her as crazy. Andrea’s therapist has asked her to jot down the things that consumes her mind at that and will then point out the errors, or cognitive distortions in her thoughts. The therapist will then help Andrea come up with more realistic and rational interpretations that

Andrea can use in these situations.

The results of Thought Challenging in CBT are as follows:

Challenging Negative Thoughts
Thought #1: What if I start crying in the elevator?
Cognitive distortion: Predicting the worst **More realistic thought:** I don't think I will cry on the elevator since I have never even cried in public.
Thought #2: It will be awful if I start to cry!
Cognitive distortion: Adverse reactions to situations **More realistic thought:** Maybe it will only last a minute if I cry. It's not that terrible.
Thought #3: People will think I'm crazy.
Cognitive distortion: Jumping to conclusions **More realistic thought:** Maybe people will be concerned and ask if I'm okay.

It may sound easy to replace negative thoughts with rational ones but for the anxiety-ridden person, negative thoughts may mean thinking them for their whole life. Practice is needed to stop this habit, and that is why CBT is very important because it requires practicing these things on your own at any time of the day.

CBT also includes:

- Learning to identify when you are anxious and how your body reacts to this feeling
- Facing fears whether in your imagination or real life

- Learning relaxation methods and coping skills to neutralize anxiety and panic

Exposure Therapy in Treating Anxiety

If you have watched the animated movie Inside Out, it tells you that feeling negative emotions are not bad because it helps remedy the soul as well as any relationship you have. Being happy and positive all the time is not realistic and being sad, depressed and negative all the time is not good either. There must be a balance.

Feeling anxious in some situations is just our mind telling us to be more cautious and wary. But feeling anxious all the time, being in constant fear and worry just makes life harder to deal with.

One of the things individuals do to prevent an anxiety attack is to steer clear from any scenarios that will make them anxious. If you have a fear of public speaking, you would most likely avoid any kind of speech giving or toast at any cost. Or if you have a fear of heights, you'd probably avoid driving through suspended bridges or looking outside the window in your office tower or applying for jobs at places that have offices in landed buildings rather than in towers.

Apart from the inconvenience, avoiding your fears is only a temporary solution. You do not give yourself the chance to overcome them. It will only make you more afraid when you avoid your fears. With exposure therapy, the therapist trains the patient to expose themselves to the situations that make them anxious. With repeated exposure, the hope is that the individual will gain more and more control over this situation and in the process, diminish the sense of anxiety.

The therapist exposes a patient in two ways:

- Therapist asks you to imagine the situation
- When the patient confronts it in real life

Exposure therapy usually begins with a mildly threatening situation and it gradually moves on from there. This is called systematic desensitization and it allows the patient to slowly face up to their fears and along the way, build confidence and master the skills required to control their panic and think rationally.

Facing a fear of getting stuck in an elevator

Step 1: Look at photos of elevators.

Step 2: Watch videos of people getting in and out of elevators.

Step 3: Watch people getting in and out of elevators in real life.

Step 4: Get into an elevator with a therapist.

Step 5: Practice breathing.

Step 6: Press the number of the first floor.

Step 7: Allow the doors to close.

Step 8: Continue breathing in and out.

Step 9: Elevator door opens again.

Step 10: You step out of the elevator.

There are three parts that is covered by systematic desensitization:

1. Learning relaxation skills

The individual is taught by the therapist some relaxation techniques like progressive muscle relaxation or deep breathing. The patient should practice during therapy and when they are at home. They should use the relaxation techniques they have learned once they confront their fears to decrease any physical response to anxiety and help them relax.

2. Creating a step-by-step list

The therapist also includes some exercises for the patient. They are encouraged to list at least 20 situations they find frightening until they moved

down to their final goal. For example, if the individual's final objective is to conquer their fear of closed spaces, they might begin by taking a look of pictures of small spaces and rooms, and end it by getting or even staying in a small room like in an elevator. Each step on this process should be precise, measurable, and understandable.

4. Working Through The Steps

The person will start working on the list with the help of the therapist. The aim is staying in every challenge until the fear goes away and they have the confidence to face them. The person will learn, in this way, that they can't be hurt by the feelings and that those feelings will eventually go away. The therapist will help the person revert back to the relaxation technique when their anxiety becomes too much to handle. Once they are relaxed again, the person should concentrate on the situation again. This should be repeated until they don't feel too distressed when they finish one step.

Complementary Therapies for Anxiety Disorders

Other complementary therapies used together with CBT can also help with anxiety and bring your stress levels related to anxiety to manageable levels. Ultimately, it will help you achieve emotional balance.

Some of these therapies include:

- **Exercising**

Exercise naturally relieves stress and anxiety. If you exercise at least 30 minutes a day, up to five times a week, your anxiety symptoms will be reduced. It is recommended to exercise for an hour every day.

- **Relaxation Techniques**

Mindfulness meditation, breathing exercises, progressive muscle relations and, visualization are all relaxation techniques that benefit the anxiety patient as well as the normal adult.

- **Biofeedback**

Biofeedback uses sensors to calculate the unique physiological functions

like muscle tension, breathing, and heart rate. The data can be used to teach the patient to be aware of the anxiety response of their body and control those responses thru relaxation techniques.

- **Hypnosis**

Hypnosis is often used as a supplementary therapy as part of CBT, especially for chronic anxiety disorders. You will be put into deep relaxation by the hypnotherapist. He will then use various therapeutic techniques so that you can conquer your fears and view them in a different light.

How to Make Anxiety Therapy Work for You

Bear in mind that your anxiety can't be treated immediately. You will invest on time and commit fully to overcome your disorder. You need to face your fears rather than avoid them and while it may make you feel worse in the beginning, staying committed to your counseling and therapy sessions will eventually make you feel better to face them.

You may not see the benefits so soon, but sticking to it and heeding your therapist's advice will benefit you in the long run. You can always support your treatments and therapies by making positive fixes on your own. Exercising is a good start, eating right is a good start. Doing things to make you feel more relaxed, focus, and invigorated is a good start. Ultimately by doing so, you are already setting the state towards a successful treatment by making conscious decisions and efforts towards a positive and vibrant mental outlook.

Actively Promoting a Positive Lifestyle

Understanding what you are going through will help you overcome your anxiety. Together with the help of your therapist, it is always important to understand the problem you are facing, so that it will be much easier to open up your feelings, sharing your fears, and identifying what makes you feel anxious or fearful or worry. Learning about anxiety alone will not cure, it but it is a step in

the right path which enables you to reap the most benefits from every session you have with your therapist.

Cultivating your connections with other people

Anxiety often increases when you find yourself alone, lonely, and isolated. It sets the stage for more negative thinking and behavior and if you do this, you are only hindering the process of becoming better and undoing the work that you and the therapist have put in. Your goal here is to decrease this vulnerability by reaching out to the people you trust and those who will be able to support you. Make an active decision to schedule time to meet your friends even for coffee or even join church groups or self-help groups, support groups or even hobby groups so that you can indulge in things that are positive and be surrounded by people who are positive. When you have alone time with close friends or family members, share your worries and concerns so that you do not have to keep it in.

Adopting a healthier lifestyle

Adopting healthier lifestyle choices and habits aid in the process of recovery. Exercise helps relieve tension and anxiety so indulge in any kind of sports as regularly as you can. Do not consume drugs and alcohol in a bid to suppress the feelings of anxiety. These things only work temporarily and before you know it, you get hooked into this. Avoid any kind of stimulant as well such as nicotine and caffeine. These stimulants are known to exaggerate anxiety symptoms.

Reducing clutter and stress

Look for ways to minimize stress in your life whether it is from work or from home. If someone makes you anxious, stay clear and away from them. Try not to take on extra responsibilities and always make room for relaxation, for some fun and laughter in your life. Also, get enough sleep for at least seven to eight hours a day. Enough sleep helps reduce stress and makes you much more positive.

Bottom Line

Ultimately, anxiety is a treatable disorder, and there are many things that an individual can do on their own to reduce these symptoms. Of course, getting the help of a therapist is essential, and it will help you stay on track and also learn life skills and values that you can carry all throughout your life no matter what changes may come. Life is, at the end of the day, a process of solving issue after issue, problem after problem, until we at least leave the earth. But while you are still in it, emotional balance is essential and so is peace of mind. Many people think visiting therapists means that there is something mentally wrong with them. This is not true.

Living in this world makes us go through plenty of disorders, some mild but sometimes, it can be chronic. But always remember that help is always there when you need it.

Chapter 6 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Eating Disorders

Cognitive Behavioral therapy is known for its effective treatment for disorders related to eating. This therapy has leading evidence and is the preferred approach for therapists to treat people who have eating disorders especially bulimia and anorexia.

CBT is psychotherapeutic which is why it has been proven to work. This approach involves using a variety of techniques not only to change the thinking patterns of the patient but also allow them to be more positive in their emotions and well-being.

The techniques and approaches used in CBT help the patient to comprehend the interaction between their thoughts, their feelings, and their behaviors, and work together to develop strategies to change these negative thoughts and behaviors so that it can improve their functioning and mood.

Take note that there are many forms of CBT that have the same principles regarding elements that is useful in maintaining psychological distress, and it is not just simply a definite single therapeutic technique. Other forms of behavioral therapy, such as Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT), and are some of the specific forms of CBT treatments.

Essentially, CBT is goal-oriented and time-limited. It also encourages the patients to practice more in their homes and not just during sessions. Not only that, but CBT also stresses the importance of therapist-patient collaboration so active participation by the patient is crucial for success.

Apart from eating disorders, CBT is also regularly used and very effective to treat other kinds of psychiatric problems such as OCD, phobias, generalized anxiety disorder, and depression.

How It All Started

Christopher Fairburn, Stuart Agras, and G. Terence Wilson developed using CBT for targeting eating disorders during the late 1970s. Three major aspects were identified by these researchers which were the body shape, dietary restrictions, and weight concerns which were the main themes for bulimia nervosa.

After that, clinical trials were introduced and a treatment protocol that lasts for 20 sessions was created. Fast forward to the 90s, this CBT formula was also used in binge eating disorder. An updated manual was published by Fairburn for the treatment of Enhanced Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT-E) which was specifically used to treat disorders related to eating.

The CBT-E format included two elements:

1. A focused treatment that had similar elements to the original manual
2. A broader treatment approach that included extra modules to address certain issues such as low self-esteem, interpersonal difficulties, mood intolerance, as well as perfectionism.

CBT has been applied successfully in both guided self-help formats and self-help to treat bulimia and anorexia nervosa as well as binge eating. This format can also be used in higher levels of care such as residential and inpatient settings and group formats.

Effectiveness

Considered as the most effective therapy to treat bulimia, CBT is, therefore, the preferred psychotherapeutic treatment. Health institutes promote CBT as the first line of cure for adults who suffer from binge eating and bulimia. It is also one of the three recommended treatments for treating anorexia nervosa in adults.

Verified Studies

This o ne study compares 20 full sessions of CBT for five months for females who suffer from bulimia nervosa with two years of psychoanalytic psychotherapy every week. They assigned 70 patients randomly for these two groups.

The CBT treatment ended after approximately five months. At least 6% of patients in the psychoanalytic therapy group and 42% of patients in the CBT group stopped vomiting food out and binge-eating. The psychoanalytical therapy ended after 2 years. The results showed that 15 percent of the psychoanalytic group and 44 percent of CBT group were completely symptom-free.

In this study , it focused on the results of CBT-E with interpersonal therapy (IPT), which is an alternative leading treatment for adults with an eating disorder. The researchers randomly assign 130 adult patients that have a binge-eating disorder with an eating disorder to either receive IPT or CBT-E. Treatment for both IPT and CBT-E included 20 sessions over a 20 week period. There is follow-up period of 60 weeks after that.

Results of the post-treatment showed that only 33 percent of the IPT participants met the necessary characteristics for remission, as compared with at least 66 % of the CBT-E participants. The remission rate of the CBT-E over the follow-up period remained higher (69 percent versus 49 percent).

Cognitive Model of Eating Disorders

The Cognitive model used in eating disorders states that the main problem in eating disorders is an extreme concern with shape and weight. This extreme concern can manifest in many different ways. It can be driven via these

various ways:

- Binge eating
- Low weight
- Strict dieting
- Compensating behaviors such as excessive exercise , laxatives, and self-induced vomiting

Not only that, but these various components can also manifest itself to create eating disorders symptoms. Strict dieting usually includes avoiding ‘forbidden foods,’ skipping meals, and only eating small portions of food.

This causes binge eating or low weight. When a person has low weight, this leads to malnutrition. Bingeing, on the other hand, can lead to intense shame and guilt as well as a renewed dieting attempt. It can also lead to undoing purging attempts through compensatory behaviors. In this case, patients are caught in a horrendous cycle of eating.

Components of CBT

CBT is a structured treatment that consists firstly with weighing the patient, teaching skills and also problem-solving skills, their case homework, and reviewing their case formulation.

CBT typically includes the following components:

- Understanding what enables eating disorders and the medical and psychological consequences.
- Replacing dieting with eating normally which consists of three meals and two or three snacks each day. The patient can choose what to eat as long as it is a meal or a snack.
- Meal planning which involves the patient planning meals ahead of time and knowing what and when their next meal would be.
- Completing their food records which immediately after they have a meal and noting feelings and thoughts as well as their behaviors.
- At least weighing once a week to track progress
- Developing strategies to prevent compensatory behaviors as well as binges

- Challenging dietary rules which include identifying these rules and challenging them behaviorally.
- Replacing an all-or-nothing type of thinking with continuum thinking
- Using behavioral experiments such as when a patient think that eating a cupcake will make them gain five pounds, the therapist encourages them to consume the cupcake anyway and see if that happens.
- Exposure to fear foods is usually conducted once a regular eating pattern has been well established and any compensatory behaviors are under control, patients are reintroduced to foods that they feared before.

Relapse prevention is also done to identify strategies that were helpful and also how to deal with possible future blockers. CBT treatment for eating disorders is time-limited hence the goal is for the patient to eventually become their own therapists.

The Ideal Candidates for CBT

Adults suffering from OSFED - other specified eating disorder, binge eating disorders, as well as bulimia nervosa are ideal candidates for CBT. Even older adolescents with bulimia and binge eating disorder also benefit from CBT.

Response to Treatment

Therapists introduce behavioral changes as early as they possibly can when conducting CBT. According to research results, patients who make behavioral changes early in therapy such as reducing purging behavior and establishing regular eating are more likely to be successfully treated at the commencement of the treatment.

When CBT Doesn't Work

CBT is the first in line for eating disorder treatments. However, if a CBT trial isn’t successful, patients would then be referred to DBT, which is a specific branch of CBT that is more intensive. They might also undergo partial hospitalization or even a residential treatment program.

Chapter 7 - How to Support someone who is going through therapy

It takes a lot of guts to decide to go into therapy. Many people choose not to do it because they do not want to face the reality of the situation. They don't want to know if they are ill or there is something wrong with them.

But someone you know has taken that active step, and by doing so, they have acknowledged that they want to get better or to find out if there is anything wrong with them that needs fixing.

No matter what the reason may be, your role is vital depending on how close you are to this person. It could be your spouse, your best friend, your colleague, your sibling or even your neighbor. If they have chosen to open up to you and tell you that they are going through therapy then you can be actively involved to help them through this time.

How can you help?

How do you help someone going through therapy, especially when you do not know anything about therapy or any therapeutic process yourself? What should your level of involvement be? Are you required to show up with them for every session? Do you stay out of it? Do you talk about it?

These may all be a little stressful for you but remember that the person going through therapy is even more stressed up about this than you are. One of the first things to do is to remind yourself that sharing the fact that they are going through therapy is a sign that they trust you and that your relationship with them means a lot.

Due to this trust, your first move is to make sure that you will continue to

be their friend and confidante whenever you need them. If you are their partner or spouse, reassure them that you will continue to love them no matter what and will help as best as you can.

Here are eight ways that you can help being a partner or friend support:

a.i.1. Be available

A big warning sign to you, therapy can lead to places that neither you nor your partner was planning to go to, and the fallout from it could be intense. There will be tears; there will be anger, confusion, and exhaustion afterward. Therapists often administer ‘deep work’ which is a segment of intense psychotherapy that involves diving into a very primal and usually upsetting part of your life and sometimes, it can be a place we never thought existed. This place could be the reason for your anxiety, worry, and fear. At this point, remember to give your partner the space he or she needs to allow this information to sink in. They need time post-session to process what they have been through. It’s like resting after a session of chemotherapy. Cook dinner, give back rubs, do extra chores around the house. Essentially, be present.

a.i.2. Allow them to talk it with you

Some people are open to talking about their sessions and what they’ve discovered, whereas some of them aren’t. The important thing to know is that you don’t have to act like a therapist when they do open up to you or talk to you about their sessions. Be open and let them talk. There will be things that would only come up now and don’t be upset if it does. That’s what therapy does. It unleashes certain issues that you and your partner or friend has not spoken about before. Patients after treatment need support to deal with these matters.

There may be instances that you might be invited to join in any of the sessions, especially if the patient has brought you up in the conversation. Depending on how close you are to them, the therapist will ask you to join in if they deem it necessary to aid in unpacking certain issues and problems. As a friend, partner, sibling or parent, be prepared for this. You must be willing to be part of this process if you want to help your friend.

You could also become worried or panicked and weighed down because you do not know what to expect, and this is a sign that whatever it is that you are concerned about, it needs to be out in the open as well to help in the healing process of both parties. Having a conversation in a neutral space with an intermediary (the therapist) helps in healing and support.

3. Respect their rights not to talk too

You might be anticipating that your friend, partner, spouse, sibling, parent, or child might come back and want to talk about their therapy session. While it is perfectly okay to ask how their session went, expect not to have an answer. Communicating with a therapist is a different and unique talking, and more often than not, it's hard to translate or relay it again outside the therapeutic space. It could also be that your partner or friend may not be ready to discuss what has happened or they are too exhausted to talk about it. If you get this vibe, it is best to respect their right not to speak about it. You can also establish a ground rule with them on the level of involvement they would like to have from you. As their therapy journey continues, revisit this level of commitment. For all you know, your partner, friend, spouse, sibling, parent, or child may find it easier to engage with you.

The prime route to maneuver around this is to remember privacy. Respect their privacy the way you want your privacy to be respected too. Sometimes, they may not be too eager to share information immediately only because they don't feel like it or if they feel the time is not right. But that does not mean they do not trust you. If they share information with you that is sensitive, ensure them that you will maintain confidentiality. Ultimately, talk things out and remember not to be a therapist or contradict the therapist. Your support whether silently or just by being there means more than anything to a person who is undergoing therapy.

4. Understand their distress

Having a partner or child or parent or friend come out of therapy weeping and crying may seem like an alarming situation, especially when you have never had any experience with therapy. Do not look at this as a sign of distress or that the therapist is not doing their job well. The therapist's job isn't a standup comedian to make your partner or friend feel happy all the time. Their job is to determine psychological problems and help them deal with it and find

solutions for it.

Some bad therapists make patients feel bad about them. So, it is critical to find a good and trained therapist. But distress is often a natural response to any therapy session. Also, if there is no crying, weeping or distress doesn't mean that the therapy sessions aren't working as well. People respond differently to therapy sessions. It is a different experience for everyone.

5. Support their decision on getting help

Sitting and confronting things once every week (or how often you are required to attend sessions) can be depressing. It is depressing to talk about issues we do not like or things that are bothering us. However, having a support system outside the therapeutic space is essential. Having caring parents or siblings or friends can help the healing process for any individual going through therapy. Sometimes, the patient might feel that it is a waste of their time going for therapy sessions, but this is where you come in and support them and remind them that benefits will come, it will just take time.

6. It isn't about you

A person going for therapy is going for it for themselves alone and also to repair and fix their relationship with the people around them. Sometimes, it has nothing to do with connections and relationships, but just the way that person deals with life in general. If you are someone close to the patient and your relationship with them is as a spouse or partner, do not demand to know what they talk about in therapy.

7. Don’t expect them to get better fast

It will take some time before you or even your friend or partner sees results. Unknotting problems of the mind is a drawn-out and fraught process, and it involves trust with the therapist, trying out different approaches, going through tests and deep examinations and a whole lot of exercise. It is hard for the patient and sometimes, it is also hard for loved ones to understand what the patient is going through. Just remember that all good things take time. Your love and support will go a long, long way and always encourage them to be committed to their therapy sessions, not for anyone else but themselves.

8. You might want to get support

If the patient is someone close to you, a family member, a spouse/partner, your parent or sibling, chances are that you may need emotional support to help deal with this as well. You need to get enough emotional nourishment as well especially if the patient was your support all these time. Speaking to another family member you can trust with confidential information or even a friend is helpful for you to help you get through this together.

Bottom Line

Depending on whom the patient is and what your relationship is with them, being part of their support system is vital in ensuring that they come out of their disorder in a healthy way. Having a good support system helps the patient and it also makes the therapists’ job easier knowing that the patient is surrounded by positive influences.

Therapy will be good on some days and bad on some days and sometimes, all the patient needs is space or a shoulder to cry on or an ear to listen. Being there or just listening to them speak can be extremely helpful in so many ways. If things get too much for you to handle, seek help. Psychological problems are not something that should be kept in secret or isolated. Treat it as you would a physical problem such as cancer or surgery.

Chapter 8 - Mistakes to Avoid in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is a very effective method to treat a variety of psychological disorders. If you or someone you know is undergoing therapy, it helps to know what CBT is and how it is administered to a patient. Take note that not all treatments are the same. A trained therapist will know how to treat specific disorders and what kind of CBT treatments to administer to them.

While the treatment is going on, some common mistakes can be prevented to ensure that the therapy sessions go on effectively. Here are some of the common mistakes that either caregivers, patients or even doctors sometimes make, and how to correct them:

#1- Not understanding the importance of repetition for change

This is specifically for doctors. When treating patients using CBT, it is not encouraged to tell the patient how to think and immediately expect them to alter their thoughts. The element to a successful implementation of CBT was the repeating of statement that could change irrational thinking, and these statements are what the therapist must use to help these patients too.

Just because someone told them to think differently doesn’t mean that they will immediately change their minds. If this were true, then nobody would need CBT because all you needed to tell someone was to think differently and they would immediately do it. With CBT, these various methods were crafted in order to provide the patient with different magnitudes to change and also for the therapist to employ different strategies to change a person’s way of thinking.

A key component of CBT is repetition, and this cannot be emphasized enough and actually, it is true with any new skill that you want to change or alter

or learn. A move or skill or method done thousands of times will eventually become automatic to the person. At first, things will be awkward as your body or mind has not done a certain move before. Your movements are slow as you execute a movement or you forget to think the way you are supposed to. But as you keep practicing to think or move in a certain way, each aspect of this move or thinking will become automatic the more you practice. You will be able to automatically respond or act without even thinking.

Altering the way you think is learning a new skill as well; just the same way you learn a physical skill. You can't be a good golfer if you do not practice swinging your club at least a few thousand times. According to Malcolm Gladwell in the book 'Outliers', the magic number to masterfully learn a skill, physical or mental, is by doing it for at least 10,000 hours. Successful people who are professionals in their field hone their craft or skills by spending at least 10,000 hours on it.

This does not necessarily mean that it will take 10,000 hours to change the way you think in order to have a positive impact on your life but it just gives you an idea of how much time you need to invest to make things happen or reach your goals. Frequent repetition of challenging thoughts will bring in results as you will start noticing changes in four to eight weeks of therapy. But to make it automatic, you need to consistently keep practicing.

It is the same way you have spent thousands of hours repeating irrational thoughts and most likely, your brain automatically programs to think that way.

You need to identify specific, beneficial, and positive thoughts in order for your brain to think in a different way. Keep exercising these thoughts repeatedly; especially when you feel that your mind is wandering into the negative zone.

Oftentimes, especially when you are first going through therapy, it is usually difficult to achieve this vital repetition. But this is why reading articles on CBT and understanding the mistakes that you should not be doing comes in handy. Alternatively, you can also read motivational articles or quotes and listen to audio tapes to alter your thinking.

#2- Making social comparisons and creating assumptions on CBT

Often times, when a therapist explains cognitive therapy to their patients and examine their irrational thinking and also explain why this thinking is irrational, patients usually say that it does make sense and wonder why they never thought of this before.

However, in some cases, once patients understand the process of using irrational thought challenges, they come to assume that this is the way that they should be thinking at all times, without ever examining the need to change their entire thinking process.

This will then result in the mistake of using social comparison assumptions. Most patients state “I should be able to just think this way. Everyone else doesn't have to do this (referring to the CBT methods).” This thinking is a major error as they do not realize that their assumptions about other patients not using CBT techniques are utterly inaccurate.

Anyone, whether going through irrational thinking or not, can benefit using CBT techniques, the only difference is that they may not have to go through CBT techniques related to disorders.

If you listen to how successful people or even optimistic people talk, you will recognize a pattern of how they apply positive thinking in their lives. For example, you may have heard people talk about a difficult event, but then say ‘but I told myself’ or ‘I took a deep breath’ or ‘Okay, relax. Everything is going to be okay.’

What they are doing here is called self-talk to cope with the situation at hand and make sense of what's happening and react calmly before they attempt to tackle a problem.

It is wrong to assume that just because you need to mentally train yourself to learn these methods and deliberately apply them, means that you are doing something others are not doing. People all around you apply these techniques, you just either don't notice it or they do it differently from you.

The only difference here is that you learn this through therapy while other people may have been doing this naturally. There may not have role models present when you are young to learn these methods or even the opportunities to learn them while growing up. People who are successful in sports, life, in their career or relationships have all learned some methods of positive thinking therapy in their lives, and they just apply it more routinely than you do. Some people are not successful naturally.

#3- Not Making CBT Methods a Lifestyle Change

The crucial element that plenty of people do not get about CBT is that it trains the brain to react differently to situations. CBT is not about identifying the error and correcting it to bring about the impact in a patient's life. A patient may experience some benefits from altering their thoughts and lead them to believe their training or therapy is over, and they do not need to continue therapy anymore.

However, the changes we experience in cognitive-behavior needs to looked at as lifestyle change just like how you see exercise as a lifestyle change. You wouldn't sacrifice exercising for a few months, achieving your goal weight, toning your muscles, and then stopping exercising and expecting all your muscles to remain in its toned condition. It is similar to restricting calories so that you can lose weight and then not expecting to gain weight when you return to normal eating.

When you make a lifestyle change, you commit in any behavior or activity regularly in order to maintain health or good habits. Where CBT methods are concerned, the changes we make are meant to improve our emotional and mental state and well-being. We need to devote our attention to this practice in order to reap its full benefits.

The body needs constant maintenance in many ways to be in optimum health and fitness, and people have come to realize that. However, the same does not apply to the brain as plenty of people think that they don’t need maintenance. While people do take CBT and obtain its initial benefits, rarely do they look at it as a lifestyle change and will most likely revert to the old ways of thinking, the patterns and behaviors, unless they take conscious efforts to ensure that they practice CBT daily or frequently.

Practicing CBT on a daily basis such as relaxation methods would be in times of stress. To reduce the stress you experience, you may use the CBT relaxation methods. Most people would think that they feel good anyway on a daily basis, so they don't need relaxation anymore. But that isn't the case. Practicing relaxation techniques even when you do not feel stressed helps to eliminate symptoms related to stress.

#4- Not Using Relaxation Regularly

Another mistake patients and caregivers make is that they believe that the benefits of relaxation are obtainable despite only practicing it infrequently. Patients or clients report being stressed and anxious to their therapist and when asked how often do they find time to meditate or do relaxation techniques, they usually either say once or not at all. These same clients, on the other hand, report positive feedback when they employ relaxation techniques.

Your mind and body will be exercised to respond to situations in a different way when you practice relaxation exercises frequently. This practice is extremely powerful.

For example, work stresses can cause your body to react with certain symptoms such as when you drive by your workplace on your days off. Our bodies have a tendency of associating a type of stress with a person, a thing or a stress. On the other hand, our bodies can also become accustomed to relaxation responses. You would be surprised how your body and mind can have a response to certain relaxation methods such as listening to particular music. This is why audio tapes for relaxation and meditation are powerful because the moment the body hears it, it has a tendency of becoming soothingly peaceful.

#5- Expecting Results without Practice

Patients also feel that just because they went through a few relaxation techniques, that is enough already. Say for example if you were playing football, would you be confident enough to properly kick the ball when you have never even tried doing that before? Surely, not! To ensure that your CBT techniques are effective, you should keep practicing them so that when you do experience an episode, your body and mind automatically knows how to deal with it.

CBT techniques are not the same as how you do your normal breathing every day. In order to know how to react and adapt to difficult situations, you need to practice CBT on a daily basis. Just because breathing is something that you do every time, every second, some people assume that they would be able to control it at will.

The error here is that yes, you have been breathing your entire life, but you have not been regulating your breathing at will. When you experience an anxiety or panic attack, there are plenty of other things happening to your body and mind at the same time, making it hard for you to focus on calming yourself and your breathing. Regulating your breathing is different from breathing on a daily basis.

It is vital to practice regularly to achieve to change our physiological responses, especially when we feel anxious or stressed. Unfortunately, its human

nature to not be able to calm ourselves, especially when we are stressing out, which is why practicing CBT is key to mastering the techniques to respond calmly, especially if we naturally get stressed quickly. For some people, it's easier to stay calm but for most with certain disorders, practice is everything in CBT.

#6- Assuming that CBT is just about Positive Thinking

CBT is not all about thinking positively. We talk about positive thinking as a reactive to when situations become negative. However, positive thinking is just as problematic and irrational as negative thinking. Take for instance if something catastrophic is happening and you are positive at that time and think ‘Everything is going to be ok’ and because of this, you do not take the necessary steps to control or act or react in a situation, thus making it worse or even endangering your life. There are situations that would require us to be positive, but there are also situations where we need to be concerned and act fast to take the appropriate action. There will also be times that negative thinking can bring about a positive outcome.

What cognitive therapy does is not to lull clients into a false sense of security rather it enables them to approach life situations in a realistic manner. If we worry about issues that are less likely to happen, then we are getting worked up for nothing and would only make things worse or if we are too relaxed and optimistic about something when in actual fact, you need a fast response, things happen badly too.

CBT just helps clients to look at these situations practically and realistically. It is about assessing our thoughts so that we can take the most practical and reasonable approach.

#7- Thinking that emotions are irrational

The other side of the spectrum of CBT is that people think that emotions are not a good thing. One of the main founders of cognitive therapy, Albert Ellis, says that we are always rational, we would not feel anger. How is that possible when all of us as human beings feel things and are created to have emotions?

This concept is extremely misleading, not to mention a dangerous thought exercise. We human beings are emotional and these emotions make up an important aspect of our processing system that actually keeps us rational. They allow us to become aware of the issues you are facing and actually address them appropriately. No human being can be free of emotions and it is healthy to have emotions. Extreme emotions though, need to be kept in check.

Without emotions, we miss important aspects of our environment. Our initial emotional reactions prepare us to face situations, whether to fight or to flee, and this intellectual response determines what emotion helps us make the better decision. No doubt that our emotions are the one that causes us to overreact but these emotions sometimes make us more acutely aware of our surroundings. Say perhaps you are walking in a dark alley and you feel threatened when you are really aren't. We prevent a false sense of security but become more aware of the things around us.

However, if we keep overreacting to every situation, this is where CBT can help. CBT can help us understand how to identify when we may be overreacting and also to keep our emotions in perspective.

Over the years, to prevent overreacting, therapists have used CBT but have found that it was too limiting until it inhibited the processing of emotions. Thus, therapists moved towards a more mindfulness-based CBT, known as MCBT, which focuses on learning to tolerate different emotional states rather than eliminate them.

#8- Placing Demands on Rationality

Being rational is a good thing and it benefits us greatly, but that does not mean that you SHOULD be rational ALL THE TIME. Saying that you should be rationale all the time is an irrational statement in itself. First, this is a perfectionist demand and second, CBT is about decreasing stress by cultivating realistic expectations. Third, this statement is irrational because of the idea that if something is bad, the opposite is good.

CBT is about finding balance. With clients who are anxious, therapists usually employ exposures to provoke anxiety so that patients have the opportunity to train to defuse the situation. If you are worried or afraid of something, then you need to face it. But it isn't the case all the time. It is not always good to challenge fear. Sometimes, it helps to just run away from it.

This attitude can bring unnecessary stress which could interfere with a person's progress in the fears that are much more important to face. Evaluating a fear is vital because a person can then decide on what affects their satisfaction and how to overcome or deal with it.

#9 - Not Taking Responsibility for Change

We also need to stop using CBT as an excuse to not try to change or change. CBT does teach a person to appreciate and recognize all aspects for themselves and it is meant to be used to create a foundation that provides a stable foundation that people can make changes. Those undergoing CBT understand that the therapy does make your feel good thus giving a person greater confidence to try new things and make better improvements in their life. Accept your flaws and understand that there are some areas in your life that need change and needs improvement, especially when these areas are destructive to you and the people around you. Do not feel bad about acknowledging the existence of this flaw. Accept yourself, flaws and all, but work on these flaws to become a better person.

Some people, though, take this as a justification for not taking responsibility for the changes that are taking place. They tell themselves that they are fine just the way they are or they focus entirely on a cognitive belief without any consideration of the complexity of the situation. CBT should not be used as a justification for inappropriate or unhealthy behavior. It is meant to be used to help people examine their thought processes and choices so that it can improve their life and relationship. It is not meant to continue problematic attitudes.

#10- Placing Demands on Mindfulness

Another mistake that we often make, whether as patients, as caretakers or as a therapist, is to place demands or expectations on the practice of mindfulness. The issue here is that these expectations prevent us from experiencing mindfulness in a more mindful way. Part of CBT is to understand that mindfulness is a process that will take time and patience, not thousands of years, but just a little while. Mindfulness is a process that will come to you without any expectations and it is different for different people.

The critical concept here is to not try to reach mindfulness. Instead of trying to be mindful, just allow yourself to be mindful, the more you remove the demands, the more you will achieve.

Chapter 9 - CBT Exercises for Self-Therapy

If you feel your daily life is a blur, that you aren't achieving your goals or excelling in your tasks and that everything is mundane and slow, it's time to change that attitude because the only thing that is stopping you from enjoying a fulfilling, successful, and worthwhile life is your negativity!

Yes, negative attitudes and mindsets are one of the biggest obstacles that disable creative thinkers, movers, and shakers from achieving success beyond their wildest dreams. If you want to change the way you look at the world, engage in healthy activities, increase your productivity, strengthen your relationships and pave the way to higher success, then the first thing you need to do is change your perspective and outlooks on how negative and positive

emotions play their different roles in our lives.

In this chapter, we look at the various exercises that therapists often use in CBT and how you can employ some of these therapies on your own safely.

1. Journaling

Keeping a journal of thoughts and moods is one of the most fundamental aspects of CBT exercises. In doing this, therapists look for certain dominant patterns that they can take relevant steps to change.

2. Challenging thoughts

With CBT, the main goals are to find and change disruptive and negative thoughts.

Therapists specifically look for automatic thoughts. These thoughts are the ones that occur without any intention.

When therapist finds these negative thoughts and patterns, they challenge them. For example, a child who thinks that they are stupid because they are not getting straight A’s, therapists can find counter-arguments and find ways to tell the child that he’s actually intelligent and to erase any negative thoughts that the child has.

3. Changing behavior

This type of behavior is usually used for those suffering from OCD. For this type of exercise, therapy usually use intentional exposure to situations in which they will respond negatively in repetitive ways. The therapist will also intentionally re-create a scenario and encourage the patient to react in a different or alternative way.

4. Introspective exposure

For this type of exercise, therapy is usually used for those who have panic attacks and anxiety.

In this situation, therapist intentionally recreates bodily sensations that patients will respond negatively to. They then deliberately make the patient react in a different, new and healthier way. This exercise trains the patients' mind to stop reacting to sensations that would cause anxiety and panic.

5. Following Fear to the End

Most of the time when a person feels fear, they stop all their thoughts or start thinking irrationally. For example, if patients fear heights, therapists usually work towards helping the patient push aside their feelings of fear. Using this exercise, therapists usually allow the fear to manifest and continue until it is over. They will then recreate a scenario that enables the patient to feel this fear but then helps them to get on with life after the episode is over.

This will then train the patient to realize that even if the worst happens, things will probably not end up that bad as how they imagine it in their head.

6. Changing behavior experiment

For this exercise, therapists usually use it to test how a patient's different and irrational thoughts and beliefs lead to different and irrational actions. For instance, if patients believe that being hard on themselves makes them work harder, the therapist will experiment with the opposite reaction. Patients will be encouraged to stress less and be a little kinder to their own selves and see the kind of reaction they get and the results that come with it.

7. A change of perspective

With this type of exercise, therapists employ the technique of thinking the other way. Take for example a child that keeps getting bullied and then ends up failing their exams. They begin thinking that they are a failure and just stupid. What can this child do? The therapist will first ask the child to write down all the reasons or evidence that points out that they are failures.

Next, the child is asked to write down all the reasons or evidence of why he or she is a success. This gives this child a better and clearer perspective. They are now vividly aware of their shortcomings and also acutely aware of their

strengths too.

8. Looking for positives

This is a favored exercise among CBT therapists. It has been proven that positivity makes people healthier. But how do you train your mind to be more positive?

You can:

1. Make a habit of scheduling positive events that you can look forward to
2. Always look at the positives from past experiences.
3. Always look at the positive aspects even at the present time and focus on all the good things that are happening around you.

Do all of those things above, just not one of them. These are all some of the small things you can do to object a little bit of positivity.

9. Facing Fears

For this CBT technique:

1. You need to write a list of your fears or of negative things that worry you.
2. Compile a list of events from the good ones to the bad ones.
3. Go through each event, beginning with the easiest and working towards the hardest. And actually face those fears.

This will build your tolerance for unpleasant experiences and trains the mind to overcome fear.

10. Turning negative to positive

For this CBT technique, it is simply about writing a positive reasoning for every negative thought that comes out of the patient's mind. For example, when a patient thinks "I'm ugly" so adversely, they just write "I'm beautiful". In this technique, it is all about remembering positive things that happened yesterday and even today.

12. I hate that, but I love that

This final technique is about turning our negatives into our positives. Whenever a negative situation arises, we pinpoint and focus on the positives. So even if you are in a burning building, you focus your mind into looking at the positives. Is there an open window? Can you find the door? Is your phone with you? Can you call the fire department? Do you have a blanket that you can wet and cover yourself with? A bathtub, maybe?

Training our mind to not dwell on the negative enables us not only to see the positives but also respond reactively.

Try These Mindfulness CBT Exercises

13. Three-Minute Breathing Space

The primary mindfulness CBT exercises are called ‘Three-Minute Breathing Space’. It is an easy and quick mindfulness-of-breath exercise. This breathing exercise is also called ‘a practice for approaching experience from two intentional lenses, both narrow and wide’ according to Zindel Segal.

This three-minute exercise is broken down to:

1. The first minute is dedicated to observing how we feel, and we describe those feelings in words
2. The second minute focuses on practicing the awareness of our breathing
3. The third minute is the continuation of focusing on breathing but then bringing back the awareness to the entire body.

14. Body Scan

The body scan meditation is a popular meditation technique and you have probably come across from some YouTube video or even through meditation apps. This type of meditation has a great way of enhancing a person’s happiness and at the same time reducing any symptoms related to depression and anxiety.

15. Mindful Stretching

Both body and mind health is crucial, and if the body can benefit from some stretching, surely the mind can have those same benefits too. Mindful stretching is exactly what it sounds like, it stretches the mind. There are different

types to this technique and this includes:

- Pandiculation: While sounding ridiculous, this technique refers to a type of stretching that we do when we yawn. To do this stretch, we do exactly what we do when we yawn, palms on shoulders, elbows raised, mouth open.

- Proprioceptive Neuromuscular Facilitation: This technique is a stretch that is normally used by sportspersons especially footballers who have cramps in their legs.
- Gomukhasana (cow-face pose): For this technique, which is sort of a yoga post, you sit cross-legged while interlocking your hands behind your back. This move expands the chest.

- Side-to-side neck stretch: You probably would have done this stretch a few times during gym class. You simply put your hand on one side of your head, tilting it to the right and left.

- Eka Pada Rajakapotasana (One-Legged King Pigeon Pose): For this technique, you place your hips to the mat, with one leg in front of you, perpendicular to the mat whilst your other leg stretches out straight behind you. This is a more complex pose that beginners may struggle with. For a more comprehensive guide, visit YogaOutlet's guide .

- The Scorpion: This technique requires you to lie flat on the ground on your back, and keep your arms on your side. Lift your right foot high up and press out your right hip. Next, stretch the right foot to the outside of the left leg. It's important to keep your chest and the arms on the flow while doing this. This technique is a modified version of Vrischikasana (Scorpion Pose).

16. CBT Stop Technique

In this technique, you basically stop all negative thinking and thoughts in its tracks. CBT therapists use this technique to intercept bad thoughts when a patient starts thinking it and immediately aids the patient in changing them.

Here's how the stop technique is conducted:

1. Take note of when you have negative thoughts.
2. When this happens, STOP. Take a deep and mindful breath.

3. Make a mindful observation of the thoughts going through your mind.
4. Notice what elements or topics that you are focusing your thoughts on.
5. Notice any sensations in the body.
6. Pull back and examine the thoughts.
7. What's the overall picture of the thought?
8. What's another way of looking at the situation?
9. How important is the thought?
10. What would you say to a friend who had this thought?
11. What is the first thing you could do right now to help yourself? Do it.

17. CBT Downward Arrow Technique

This downward arrow technique can be used to uncover core perceptions and beliefs that disrupt our normal life, and it is usually conducted with the help of a licensed therapist.

Here's how the CBT Downward Arrow Technique is applied:

1. It starts with the choosing one negative thought from the patient's journal. This could be anything from meeting people, swimming, or having to do a presentation.
2. The therapist asks the patient "Why would it upset you if this happened?"
3. The patient answers the question. "If my presentation is bad, my boss will be angry."
4. The therapist then asks why that would matter, "If my boss is angry, I may lose my job."
5. This keeps going until the therapist and patient come to a core self-defeating belief: "Because if I lose my job, I won't be able to support my family."
6. The idea behind the CBT Downward Arrow Technique is to discover the self-defeating belief that results in all these negative perceptions, and not necessarily to change it.

18. Creative visualization

Creative visualization is a mental technique that harnesses our imagination to make our goals and dreams a reality. When used the right way, creative visualization has been proven to improve the lives of the people who have used it, and it also increases the success and prosperity rate of the individual.

Creative visualization unleashes a power that can alter your social and living environment and circumstances, it causes beneficial events to happen, attracts positivity in work, life, relationships, and goals. Creative visualization is not a magic potion. It uses the cognitive processes of our mind to purposely generate an array of visual mental imagery to create beneficial physiological, psychological or social effects such as increasing wealth, healing wounds to the

body or alleviating psychological issues such as anxiety and sadness.

This method uses the power of the mind to attract good energy and really, it is the magic potion behind every success.

Mostly, a person needs to visualize an individual event or situation or object or desire to attract it into their lives. This is a process that is similar to daydreaming. It only uses the natural process of the power of our mind to initiate positive thoughts and natural mental laws.

Successful people like Oprah and Tiger Woods and Bill Gates use this technique, either consciously or unconsciously, attracting success and positive outcomes into their lives by visualizing their goals as already attained or accomplished.

The Power of Thoughts and Creative Visualization

So how does this work and why is it so important to us?

Well, our mind is a powerful thing. With only the power of our mind, we can reach amazing success, or we can also spiral out of control. It swings both ways. Our subconscious mind accepts the ideas and thoughts that we often repeat, and when our mind accepts it, then your mindset also changes accordingly, and this influences your habits and actions. Again, a domino effect happens where you end up meeting new people or getting into situations or circumstances that lead you to your goal. Our thoughts come with a creative power that can mold our life and attract whatever we think about.

Remember the saying that goes ‘mind over matter?’ When we set our mind to do it, our body does what our mind tells us. Our thoughts travel from mind, body, and soul but believe it or not; it can travel from one mind to another because, it is unconsciously picked up by the people you meet with every day

and usually, most of the people you end up meeting are the ones who can help you achieve your goals.

You probably think and repeat certain thoughts every day pretty often, and you probably do this consciously or unconsciously. You probably have focused your thoughts on your current situation or environment and subsequently, create and recreate the same events and circumstances regularly. While most of our lives are somewhat routine, we can always change these thoughts by visualizing different circumstances and situations, and in a way, create a different reality for you to focus on new goals and desires.

Changing Your Reality

Honestly, though, you can change your reality by changing your thoughts and mental images. You aren't creating magic here. All you are doing is harnessing the natural powers and laws that inhibit each and every one of us. The thing that separates normal, average folk with wildly successful people is that the successful ones have mastered their thoughts and mental images while the rest of us are still learning or trying to cope. Changing your thoughts and attitude changes and reshapes your world.

Take for example you plan on moving into a larger apartment and instead of wallowing in self-pity such as the lack of money, do this instead, alter your thoughts and attitude and visualize yourself living in a larger apartment. It isn't difficult to do because it's exactly like daydreaming.

Overcoming Limited Thinking

You may think daydreaming about positive things and money and success and great relationships are nothing but child's play but in fact, creative visualization can do wonders. Though, it may be hard for different individuals to immediately alter their thoughts. Limits to this positive thinking are within us and not the power of our mind. We control it.

It might sound like it’s easy to change the way you think, but the truth is, it takes a lot of effort on your side to alter your thoughts at least in the immediate future. But never for a second doubt that you can’t. Anything that you put your mind to work on, it can be done.

We often limit ourselves due to our beliefs and our thoughts and to the life we know. So the need to be open-minded is an integral part of positive thinking. The bigger we dare to think, the higher and great our changes, possibilities, and opportunities. Limitations are created within our minds, and it is up to us to rise above all these obstacles.

Of course, it takes time to change the way we think and see things and broaden our horizons, but small demonstrations of changing our minds and the way we think will yield bigger results in due time.

Guidelines for Creating Visualization

Concise Guidelines for Creative Visualization:

Step 1 - Define your goal.

Step 2 - Think, meditate, and listen to your instinct. Ensure that this is the goal you want to attain.

Step 3 - Ascertain that you only want good results from your visualization, for you and for others around you.

Step 4 - Be alone at a place that you will not be disturbed. Be alone with your thoughts.

Step 5 - Relax your body and your mind.

Step 6 - Rhythmically breathe deeply several times.

Step 7 - Visualize your goal by giving it a clear and detailed mental image.

Step 8 - Add desire and feelings into this mental image, how you would feel, etc.

Step 9 - Use all your five senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

Step 10 - Visualize this at least twice a day for at least 10 minutes each time.

Step 11 - Keep visualizing this day after day with patience, hope, and faith.

Step 12 - Always keep staying positive in your feelings, thoughts, and words.

Staying positive can be easy. It is all about training your mind. When you do feel doubts and negative thoughts arise, replace them with positive thoughts. Also, remember to keep an open mind because opportunities come in various ways so when you see it, you can take advantage of them. Every morning, or each time you conclude your visualization session, always end it with this 'Let everything happen in a favorable way for everyone and everything involved.'

Creative visualization will open doors but it takes time and whenever you feel you are in a position of advantage, take action. Do not be passive or wait for things to fall on your lap. Perhaps, you've met someone who can put yours in a position of advantage to reach your goal or perhaps, you've landed a job that has the possibility of enabling you to travel. All these things come into your life, and if you have an open mind, you can see the possibilities more vividly.

When you use the power of imagination for you and the people around you, always do it for good. Never try creative visualization to obtain something forcibly that belongs to others (like someone else's husband or wife or a managerial position someone else rightfully achieved but you want as well). Also, don't harm the environment.

Most visualized goals happen in a natural and gradual manner, but there can be times that it can happen in a sudden and expected manner too.

Be realistic with your goals, though. Don't visualize a unicorn and expect it to turn up. If money is what you desire, you know that it just will not drop from the sky. You may or may not win it in the lottery. But the chances or possibilities are higher when you go through life with a new job, or you get a promotion, or you end up making a business deal. It is always better to think and visualize what you actually want because you do not want to attract situations

that are negative, in your quest to fulfill your goals and desires.

Chapter 10 - Resources and Where to Find a Good CBT Therapist

Once you have made a decision to seek therapy, the next step is to find a proper therapist.

Most people have little to no idea on how to select a therapist or how to evaluate a good one. In this chapter, we will look at providing information that would be useful in selecting a CBT therapist.

There is no strict rule for selecting a therapist because different therapists employ different methods, and it also depends on the patient itself.

However, you can ask yourself a series of questions that will shed some information into the kind of therapist that you can consider seeing before you make your final decision.

Qualifications and Training for Therapists

CBT can be conducted by a number of mental health practitioners. CBT therapists are trained in a variety of disciplines and the difference between a mental health care provider and a CBT therapist can be confusing at times.

Below is a brief list of the various trainings that CBT professional usually receive.

1- Psychologists

Psychologists have doctoral degrees from a Ph.D. to an Ed.D., and even a Psy.D., and these degrees need to be approved by the American Psychological Association. Clinical psychologists will also go through a one-year clinical internship followed by one to two years of supervised postdoctoral experience in order to receive a practicing license in mental health care. Licensing or certification procedures vary depending on the state as well as the governing provincial organizations.

2- Clinical Social Workers

Clinical social workers usually have a college degree accompanied by at least two years of graduate training in a program. This program needs to be accredited by the Council on Social Work Education. Some certified social workers also have either a master's or doctoral degree in Social Work which usually comes in MSW, DSW, or Ph.D. Again, this needs to be from a program approved by the Council on Social Work Education.

Social workers must also pass an examination by the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW). Licensing or certification procedures vary depending on the state as well as the governing provincial organizations.

3- Psychiatrists

All psychiatrists must come with a medical degree. A person can also practice psychiatry by having at least four years of medical school as well as one-year of a medical internship.

Those in a psychiatric program usually train under a five-year residency program. Board certification is also essential as this comes with two years of post-residency experience in practicing psychiatry. Future psychiatrists are required to pass an examination given by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

4- Professional Counselors

Counselors usually have a master's degree specialization or a doctoral degree. If you see counselors with (M.E.D., M.A.E., M.A., or M.S.), (Ed.S) (Ph.D. or Ed.D.) means they have obtained degrees from an accredited university. Counselors who are certified usually have graduate training in counseling and have passed examinations by the National Board of Certified Counselors.

Degrees and training described above give you a sense of what these therapists and counselors are required to have in order to practice what they do. As a potential patient, you have all the right to obtain information with regards to your treatment, methods used, length of sessions, and so on.

You will need some substantial information from the therapist before you decide on one. Most therapists and counselors offer free sessions before you sign up.

Questions to Ask when Deciding on a Therapist

A CBT therapist will dedicate the first few sessions to assess the extent and causes of your issues. You will be asked quite specific questions related to your concerns and issues, when do they occur, and how often. You need to be truthful when answering. As the both of you go on, both you and the therapist will arrive in a mutually agreeable goal, what your condition is, and how best to change it. If you do not like what the therapist has concluded, you should then look for another therapist that you feel best fits your needs.

The following are things you need to know about a prospective therapist:

1- What are their training and qualifications?

You need to know whether the therapist is licensed or certified in your state. Therapists with strong fundamentals in CBT will not mind being asked these questions as they know it is part of the process of getting to know each other and the therapist will want you to be comfortable with them. If the answers

given by the therapists are not satisfactory or refuses to answer your questions, then you should consult someone else.

2- Fees

It is vital to engage with a good therapist with reasonable fees. A good therapist will be all right with giving this information. You can either obtain this information via telephone conversation or during your first visit. Here are other things you might consider asking:

- How much are the charges per session?
- Does the therapist charge according to a sliding scale?
- Are first visits charged?
- What are the policies with regards to vacations or canceled or missed sessions?
- Do my health care policy and insurance cover therapist visits?
- How is billing done?

Other Questions to ask your Therapist

- How many times a week do I need to see my therapist?
- How long will each session last?
- How long can my treatment expect to last?
- What kind of treatments will be used?
- Would I be able to call my therapist at any time and after office hours?
- How do I reach my therapist if they are out of town or if there is an emergency?
- Are there any limitations on confidentiality?

Questions To Ask When Therapy Is On-Going

When you have decided on a therapist, you can expect to get a more comprehensive idea on the approaches to helping you reach your goals. CBT isn't just a session-oriented program. It also requires home-based work. These exercises make up an important component of CBT and since CBT is a skills-based therapy, patients are required to practice these skills after their leave the therapeutic space.

You are entitled to ask questions as you progress. Your therapist will continue evaluating your progress and if you feel your progress is too slow, then you can tell your therapist. He or she will suggest changing or altering your treatments and approaches.

At each point, you can ask these questions to yourself to gauge your progress and if you truly understand what is going on:

- Do you understand what the therapist has required you to do?
- Do the therapist's instructions seem pertinent to your objectives?
- Do you believe that following these instructions might help you make significant progress?
- Has the therapist provided you a choice of different therapy approaches?
- Has the therapist clarified the possible side effects of the therapy?

Who can you call for resources?

The Association of Cognitive and Behavioral Therapies (ACBT) is the best resource for you to get suggestions on therapists. The ACBT is not a certifying organization, but it does provide lists of full members according to state and it also includes information on the therapist's specialties and the regions they serve. You can always call ACBT to ask for a referral.

Alternatively, you can also call or check your local state for a list of

mental health care providers according to their discipline whether clinical counselors, social workers, psychiatrists, and psychologists. Many state professional organizations provide referral services. Medical schools also provide psychiatric services. You can ask to speak to someone in the counseling psychology department to get a referral.

If the local community has a healthcare clinic that is another place you can go to. Other places that you can get help in are such as:

- National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology, published by the Council of National Health Service Providers in Psychology
- National Association of Social Workers Register of Clinical Social Workers published by the National Association of Social Workers
- American Board of Professional Psychology
- Academy of Cognitive Therapy

Chapter 11 - Cultivating a Winning Mindset

CBT is different from other types of therapeutic treatment as its aim is to limit the patient's reliance on medication and instead build upon enhancing and strengthening a patient's cognitive and behavioral changes using a variety of exercises and activities.

A CBT therapist, after creating a case formulation of their patients, will start recommending several behavioral and cognitive exercises and treatments that are contained within the CBT toolbox. For CBT therapists, the exercises found in the toolbox are extremely important because they have long-term objectives which are to supply the patient with the right knowledge and resource to help themselves in the future or in other words; be their own therapist and conduct self-care.

There are plenty of exercises and activities that are appropriate for the different cases and there may also be activities that the therapists most favor. However, there is a standard set of CBT strategies that are commonly utilized by all therapists because of its effectiveness.

Plenty of these standardized and systematic methods can be used to enhance the probability of achieving the patient and therapists' goals when starting out treatment. In this chapter, we will look at the CBT tools that are commonly used in the personal development and how a CBT therapist structures these methods to make it part of the patient's therapy. All of these strategies are used to reverse a mental and emotional downward spiral.

SMART Goals & Action Planning

After a therapist develops the initial case formulation for the patient, they will then work together with the patient to create what is known as SMART Goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, & Time-Bound), and thereafter, devise a program that helps navigate the patients towards accomplishing their goals. Usually, the patient and therapist meet on a regular

basis to review and update each other on the progress towards the goals and any other actionable plan.

Self-Monitoring & Progress Evaluation:

The two most crucial CBT strategies are the progress evaluation and self-monitoring. When a patient's self-awareness increases and is regularly assessed by the therapist, this patient is able to discover faulty cognitions, dysfunctional thinking, limiting core beliefs, and any behavioral hindrances.

Cognitive Tools & Exercises:

There are other CBT tools that are geared towards challenging and changing a patient's dysfunctional thinking ways. CBT therapists usually employ a top-down approach which begins with the patient's thoughts, moving on to the cognitive exercises, and finally, cognitive activities.

To create an opposite downward spiral of mental health disorders, patients are also taught about the process of cognitive restructuring and start using tools such as a dysfunctional thought record and the ABCD Method.

Behavioral Tools & Exercises:

Apart from using cognitive exercise tools, therapists also utilize other kinds of behavioral strategies that will help their patients convert problematic and limiting thoughts and beliefs into more life-affirming alternatives. When patients take definitive action that goes above and beyond what they tell themselves internally, they are able to compile evidence that goes against the mind's detrimental cognitive patterns. Some behavioral tools that are used for this purpose are behavioral activation, behavioral experiments, and behavioral rehearsal.

T ools from Third-Wave Therapies:

Third-Wave therapies are basically innovative strategies that are derived from CBT, and they are the newest additions in the CBT toolbox. Not all CBT therapists use this exercises and activities, but it is still worth explaining and talking about them here because these third-wave therapies can help. The tools

used in the third-wave therapy such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) can be useful for our endeavors.

Using CBT to Spiral Towards Success:

CBT is based on various sets of psychological truths that can be applied in various situations and for all humanity as every person can and has the ability to implement CBT strategies to increase the levels of subjective well-being. CBT therapists use these tools to help their patients to reverse the downward spiral of mental health issues and in the same way, we can also use these tools to spiral ourselves towards our goals.

A practical way of looking at this is to think of using CBT for your personal development and to envision it in a scale of -5 to 5, the -5 to 0 to represent individuals who suffer from mental illnesses at various degrees, and the range of 0 to 5 to represent mentally healthy individuals that pursue higher levels of life satisfaction.

It is proven that by using CBT strategies in your plan of self-improvement, individuals can quickly learn how positive emotions, thoughts, and behaviors can create a domino effect that spirals you towards success.

Defining Success:

There are plenty of personal development goals that you can achieve using CBT strategies. One of the first steps is to determine what success is to you. Plenty of people assume that success is related to material possessions or having plenty of money or even being at the high ranks of social status, and they think that this will ultimately give them higher levels of satisfaction but then only to discover that they can only obtain a limited amount of satisfaction or happiness from these things.

When you define what success means to you, it is also crucial to

remember that these conventional measurements of objective achievement must not be mistaken with the more important measures of your own well-being. The best approach to take when defining what success means to you is to decide on a middle path. This middle part is a combination of professional and material success as well as life satisfaction and contentment.

SMART Goals & Action Plans:

When we have already defined what success is, we can then begin to create a number of SMART goals. To be general, we may consider setting a few of these goals:

- Spiritual
- Personal
- Intellectual
- Health & Fitness
- Financial
- Professional Development
- Relationships & Communication.

The thing is, emotional and social intelligence may be harder to measure. However, they are amongst the most important and the most rewarding of all goals to aim for in the pursuit of contentment, simply because these attributes are needed to achieve extraordinary things. Before looking at your action plans, it also works to reiterate the importance of setting what the objectives are with the SMART goals that you create.

Only when you fully commit yourself equally to who brought the intrinsic goals and desires as well as an external success, only then will you be able to find the levels of satisfaction which you want to obtain.

Do not be discouraged if you are aiming to achieve something big and monumental. All you would need to do is break down your bigger objectives into smaller measurable as well as time-bound initiatives.

The next step in this process of using CBT to achieve your goals can be considered the last time of the initial phase. This job is to create a manageable action plan which allows you to monitor your progress in tandem with your timeline. When deciding on how to break down certain objectives, this is purely an individual preference and this is based largely on the circumstances and the schedule that you have. The most important thing that you need to remember is to regularly review your progress and update your specific measurable and time-bound objectives on your action plan.

Self-Monitoring & Evaluation:

As mentioned previously the heart of CBT is self-monitoring and regular evaluation. Each and every one of us using CBT can improve and enhance our probabilities for success simply by monitoring and evaluating the actions that we take and the thoughts that we have, just like all the individuals that are able to overcome their mental illnesses by becoming aware of their issues and challenging their problematic behaviors and cognitions.

Mindfulness meditation is one amazing practice that can greatly increase an individual's awareness of negative thoughts, detrimental behaviors, and limiting beliefs that are acting as Roadblocks to its part of success. Mindfulness meditation is a Third Wave treatment strategy.

It is never an enjoyable process when we evaluate ourselves. However, it is extremely important to use to increase an individual's success, chance as well as levels of subjective well being. When you regularly evaluate your progress and update your action plan, you can be assured but you are staying focused on your objective and in the meantime, find innovative ways that enable you to achieve your goal in the most efficient and timely manner possible. Additionally, because setbacks and failures are very real in the road towards achievement and success, it is extremely important to understand how to view obstacles and disappointments as nothing more than just lessons to learn from and grow.

CBT Tools for Personal Development:

When individuals undertake the elements of SMART goals, self-

monitoring, action plans and self-evaluation, this is usually adequate to steer an individual towards success, and thus we can also increase our possibilities for achievement and reduce the time it takes to attain our goals just by utilizing CBT tools.

By focusing our decisions on and sticking to the universal psychological governing principles such as the laws of cause and effect as well as mind-body connection just like how CBT therapies do to help their patients, we can be sure that we can transform our lives in the most significant ways. After we create the positive staircase of personal development with the CBT strategies described above, we can then continue our route to success by implementing the following tools to build the momentum:

Cognitive Tools : When people undertake self-monitoring and personal evaluation, they also find dysfunctional ways of thinking that prevent them from truly succeeding. When and if you do find these achievements prohibiting mental patterns, you can then change them by utilizing the cognitive restructuring process or also known as the practice of identifying, challenging, and transforming negative thoughts into more life-affirming thinking.

This kind of dysfunctional thought record and ABCD model can guide any individual towards finding and transforming success prohibiting cognitions.

Behavioral Tools : It is true that working on transforming dysfunctional thinking and problematic habits can steer you towards success, and CBT therapists will also help patient this way to release and discover their limiting core beliefs that are found below the surface level cognition.

It is highly unlikely to become successful if you do not have complete confidence in yourself, therefore reducing the negative beliefs that we all hold inside of us is crucial for success. Thankfully, we can all find factual and founded evidence that explains beyond personal beliefs and does not serve our needs by undertaking behavioral exercises and activities.

Behavioral activation is the practice of increasing positive reinforcement & decreasing negative behavioral patterns. Behavioral rehearsal is geared towards practicing for upcoming situations & circumstances. Behavioral experiment is information gathering exercises used to test the validity of thoughts & beliefs. These are three prevalent activities worth pointing out.

360-Degree Feedback: If you need to improve and level up your social-emotional skills, your abilities to communicate with others, or your professional ranking, an extremely useful tool to use is the 360-degree feedback or multi-source feedback. The 360-degree evaluations are more often used among professional therapists, but they can also be used to gauge how other people view you in your family, in a social setting as well as in the community.

Just get people that regularly interact with you to fill out an evaluation assessment of your weaknesses and your strengths and through this, you can gain valuable insight into the ways that the people around you see you, and you can also discover untapped potential and skill that can change you and bring you to the next level. It is also crucial that you do not become angry or discouraged when the answers are against your liking. All kinds of feedback should be accepted and utilized for growth, even the bad ones.

Values Clarification Exercise: The final tools in CBT to have a winning mindset are ideal for people who are struggling to find the meaning in life. It comes in the popular form of Acceptance and Commitment Therapy which is

also known as a values clarification exercise . It is quite easy to reach for personal development especially with the false notion that success, better relationships, money, and status are the items that we should all be striving for, which is why clarifying our values and determining the kinds of people that we want to be are helpful to guide us into finding the kinds of goals that will significantly and truly increase our subjective well-being.

The effectiveness of CBT is verified, and it is clear to see how each and every one of us can employ these systematic strategies to catapult ourselves to attain a winning mindset and achievement of our goals and dreams.

We must first define success, develop our SMART goals, and commit ourselves to self-evaluation and self-monitoring which also uses CBT tools to assist us in this way.

Chapter 12 - Cultivating Positivity

As we now know, CBT is a therapy that is time-sensitive, present-oriented, and most importantly, focused on teaching people the necessary skills to alter their dysfunctional and negative behavior and thinking.

Negative behavior is destructive, and it prohibits you from leading a relatively normal life. It also stops you from achieving your fullest potential.

For us human beings, we are more inclined to be negative rather than positive but did you know that it actually takes very little to be happy and think positively rather than to be unhappy and think negatively?

If you listed ten things today and 7 of them were things that made you happy and three made you unhappy, sad, frustrated or moody, then most likely you were grateful, and you were positive. The thing is many of us would prefer to be happy and positive rather than be unhappy and negative. And it is that simple to be positive and happy. Also, positive thinking is above and beyond just being happy or displaying a cheerful and upbeat attitude. It also creates and establishes value in your life and relationships, and it also helps you build skills that benefit you longer than your smile can take you. Barbara Fredrickson, a positive psychology researcher from the University of North Carolina, published a landmark paper on the impact of positive thinking on work, health, and general wellbeing.

Here’s a little brief of Barbara’s research:

What Can Negative Thinking do to your Brain?

Our brain is programmed to respond to negative emotions by shutting off the world around us and limiting the options we see around us. For example, if you get into a fight with your sister, your emotions and anger might consume to

the point where you react adversely. You can’t think about anything else. Or for instance, your coffee this morning spilled on your shirt, and this creates a domino effect of everything going wrong in your day, and you get so stressed out that you find it hard to start or do anything because you’ve lost your focus. Or if you are supposed to complete a project but you didn’t, you start to feel bad about it and all you think is how irresponsible you are and that you are lazy, and you lack motivation. The point is, our brain shuts off from the outside world and relies on the negative emotions of fear, stress, and anger. Negative thoughts and emotions prevent us from seeing other options, solutions or choices that are around us.

What Can Positive Thinking do to your Brain?

Barbara Fredrickson also explains how positive thinking manifests in our brain. She explains with an experiment where research subjects are divided into five groups, and each group is shown a different video clip. The first group was shown clips that created feelings of joy, whereas the second group was shown clips that created contentment. The third was the control group that had images of no significant emotions and was neutral, group four had clips that created fear, and group five had clips that created the feelings of anger.

Participants were then asked to imagine themselves in situations that these same emotions would come about and write down their reactions to it. Participants that viewed images of fear and anger had the least responses or reactions, whereas participants who saw joy and contentment had more reactions. The bottom line is if you experience positive emotions, you will see more possibilities in life. Positive emotions broaden our possibilities and thinking, thus opening up more options for us in facing issues, crisis, problems, solutions, and so on. In the next few chapters, we will discuss how we can work our mind to be more positive and look at things in a more positive perspective to enhance and give more value to our life, relationships, and goals. It is not as hard as it seems because all it takes is a little practice.

Even more benefits of a Positive Attitude:

- You achieve more of your goals easily.
- You achieve success much rapidly.
- You bring in more happiness in your life and those around you.
- You have more energy to deal with everything life throws at you.
- You have more faith in your abilities and have higher hopes for a brighter future.
- You can inspire and motivate everyone around you.
- You feel you encounter fewer obstacles and difficulties compared to other people.
- You are much more respected and loved by all those around you.
- Life smiles at you.

The bottom line is, if you exhibit a negative attitude, then you will only bring in more failure and more difficulties, but if you radiate positivity, you are bound to be attracting good energy and success, so the time is NOW to change the way you think and the way you react.

Negative thoughts, behaviors, and reactions do nobody any good. If you have tried to become positive in the past but you have failed, that means you have not tried enough.

CBT therapy aims to help you rewire your brain so that you will be more inclined to think and act in more positive ways. However, even if you do not go through CBT therapy, there are plenty of ways that you can rewire and rethink how you feel and act just by doing the routines below:

Dealing with Negative Thoughts and Events

Here are some tried and tested ways to overcome negative thoughts and events which you can try:

1. Meditate or do yoga.

Yoga helps take your focus away from your thoughts and bring attention to your breath. Yoga or meditation is very relaxing, and it helps ease one's mind. It also helps you stay present and focused on the moment that is happening.

2. Smile.

Pain and sadness can make it very hard to smile. While it does seem hard to smile when you aren't feeling so happy inside, you need to sometimes force this out of you. So try doing this in front of a mirror every day or make a mental note to smile to the people you correspond with daily.

3. Surround yourself with positive people.

Surround yourself with friends and family that can give you constructive and loving feedback. Each time you feel you are going down into your negative spiral, call these people up and speak to them so they can put your focus back

again to where it’s needed to be at the time.

4. Change your thoughts from negative to positive.

Easier said than done, no doubt but you can turn any situation into a positive one. For example, if you have just started a new job you barely have enough experience of, instead of saying ‘I’ll take a long time to adjust or learn,’ just say ‘I will take on any challenges because challenges excite me!’

5. Don’t wallow in self-pity. Take charge of your life

You are the captain of your ship so do not make yourself a victim. There is always a way out of any situation, so if it becomes too unbearable, leave. Otherwise, you stay put, and make the best of it and don’t point fingers, blame, complain or whine.

6. Volunteer

Volunteering also takes the focus away. If you think you are in a bad situation, imagine the people who need food aid or money. Do something nice for someone else, so volunteer at an organization or donate.

7. Remember to keep moving forward

We easily dwell on our mistakes and feel terrible for the way we acted. But you can't reverse the situation so instead of feeling sorry for yourself or beating yourself up over what you'd done, tell yourself that you'd made a mistake, you learned from it, and you want to move on.

8. Listen to music

One of the best ways to alleviate your mood especially in the morning is by listening to songs and singing in the shower! It doesn't matter if you don't remember the lyrics – a good happy song will put you in a good and happy mood.

9. Be grateful

Being grateful enables you to appreciate all the things you have. So be grateful every day.

10. Read positive quotes.

Just log into Pinterest, and read positive quotes every day. Better yet, print out the ones that you like and stick in on your wall, your fridge or your computer.

11. Water Is All You Will Ever Need

You don't need sodas, you don't need juices. You don't need anything that comes with high sugar content, and why would you? When the only thing that is essential to your survival, the only thing that gives you life, is completely calorie free? Soft drinks, teas, coffee, and juice drinks are all unnecessary calories which you don't need. Water is all that you will ever need, and it won't even cost you an inch of your waistline but brings more benefits than all the other drinks on the market put together.

12. Get Enough Sleep

This is probably the most overlooked tip, but the one which you should make a constant habit. Proper sleep is the key to managing your hormones, which then works to manage your weight.

13. Ditch the Diet Sodas

Diet sodas are misleading. Just because it says diet, doesn't mean you're consuming fewer calories. Artificial sweeteners are a disrupter of our body's ability to naturally regulate calorie intake, and instead of dieting like the diet soda claims, you could be just encouraging your body to gain weight.

We Are what we Eat

Apart from doing the things above, did you know that what we eat also influences how we feel internally, emotionally, and mentally? Eating the right foods can boost our immune system and our moods, making us feel better. Here are some foods that you can consume to boost your mood and alleviate energy levels:

- Bee Pollen - Collected from the bodies of the bees, bee pollen is high in vitamins, carbohydrates, and lipids. It helps with asthma, combats fatigue, reduces allergic reactions, and also increases your body's energy levels.
- Blueberries - The fact that blueberries are high in antioxidants make it perfect in slowing the aging process, and it also fights free radicals that cause cancer and Alzheimer's. It is also an effective anti-depressant that can help stabilize moods swings.
- Eggs - Yes, eggs have so many benefits, plus it's yummy too! Eggs contain the right amount of protein and omega-3 fatty acids which aid in the bodily functions and heart health, too. They also contain antioxidants called lutein and zeaxanthin which protects our eyes from the light and free radicals and slows down eye degeneration due to age. Some say yolks are bad news because of their high cholesterol content but yolks contain choline, which is a vitamin B component that aids in brain function.
- Goji Berries - Goji berries have one of the highest concentrations of protein, and it contains amino acids essential to the body, and a healthy dose of vitamin A. One tablespoon of goji berries has only 18 calories

which make them a great snack option. Goji berries are a favorite pre-workout snacks as they increase energy levels and improve athletic performance. Consumption of goji berries also helps the mind to stay focused and sharp.

- Oats - Oats is an excellent source of fiber and minerals. It helps lower blood cholesterol and aids in digestion as well as improves metabolism. It is always good to make your own oatmeal as opposed to buying pre-made instant ones in the store so that you cut out on any additives and unnecessary sugar.

- Tea - Tea is a well-known ancient tonic that is ideal for plenty of things and has so many health benefits. It boosts endurance, it reduces the risk of heart issues, it can reduce the risks of cancer, it hydrates the body, it prevents damage from free radicals, and it also detoxifies.

- Zucchini - Zucchini, a staple in most grocery stores, can be used in both savory and sweet dishes. It is packed with vitamins B6 and C, potassium, manganese, and folate. Zucchini is used in many salads as it is low in calories and high in water content making salads a refreshing summer treat.

Changing your Lifestyle

Apart from eating right, changing your lifestyle also helps you stay focused and positive. If you are undergoing CBT, you will be given some form of homework that requires you to change your behaviors. Part of changing behavior is also changing your lifestyle patterns.

Here are some benefits that can motivate you to make a decision to change your lifestyle:

#1 - Creating room for more important things

When we start purging out all unnecessary things out of our life, whether it’s non-physical or physical, we create space, and we also create peace. It will make us breathe again. Think about it. Every time you do a little bit of spring cleaning, don’t you feel a lot more relaxed and mentally at peace? Clearing clutter helps us create opportunities that have a deeper meaning.

#2 - More Freedom

Accumulating things and items just because it looks cute or fuzzy or manly or makes us feel or look a certain way only makes us conform to society's expectations. It also anchors you down. You have less space to move forward because the thing that you just purchased or bought end ups adding to your credit. Not only that, but it also makes it even harder for us to let go and we hold on to things, sometimes not because of the memory attached to it but because we always think 'What if I need this tomorrow or next week or next year?' Before you know it, you are becoming a little hoarder.

#3 - Better Focus

Create the opening to focus on the things that you love, and also create the time for it. If makeup is your focus, but you find yourself buying this item and that, stocking up on other supplies and so on, you lose your focus. Instead, buying the bare minimum for other things and focus your energy, time, and money.

#4- Less Focus on Material Possession

All the stuff we surround ourselves with is only filling a particular void. Some of us think that we need to buy all the latest outfits because otherwise, we won't fit in or look fashionable. We are filling a void to be accepted or to be popular or just plainly, to be seen. The obsession with money should end after the initial desire has been satisfied. The urge to keep buying and buying is a path of emptiness, and it never makes anyone happy. While it is not easy to succumb to extreme consumerism, it is not hard to remove yourself from it either. We all enjoy stuff, but there must be a boundary where we must recognize that we don't need it.

#5 - Peace of Mind

Who doesn't want this? But to be honest, we create that huge fuss and stress without even realizing it. Think about this. You graduate, and before you even get your first job, you have a plan of how you want your life to be. Planning your future is not an issue here. But for most of us, when we land our first job, we immediately think of 'buying my first car; 'buying that new wallet' or 'finally being able to travel'. While wanting all these things are not wrong, the thing is, sometimes, we buy these things not really because we need them but we want them.

Over time, as our salary gets higher, we purchase a new car, go for luxurious holidays, and treat ourselves to bigger and better things. And then we end up having loads of stress, and our material possessions bond us. By simplifying our lives, we enable ourselves to cut ties with additional material attachments and cultivate a calmer and peaceful mind.

#6 - More Happiness

De-cluttering also brings you joy because you have a better focus on things that matter compared to the false promises that clutter usually brings. You find yourself being more efficient, have more concentration, and your priorities are reduced. You also find yourself enjoying life because your life is slightly on a much slower track than before.

#7 - Less fear of failing

We often fear failure because we have bills to pay thanks to our worldly possessions. By having little collateral, you minimize this fear and focus more on prioritizing your energy and making your passions and dreams come true.

#8 - Enhance confidence

Being a minimalist promotes individuality as well as self-reliance. You feel much more confident by your pursuit of happiness rather than the search for materials.

#9 - Greater Purposes in life

If you feel like you aren't serving your purpose on earth or there is a burning desire that you need to do more than what you are currently doing, then it could help to work towards a minimalist lifestyle so that you can bring a clear sense of purpose back to your life. You will feel much more motivated to do what you want because your focus is clear, the direction is clear, and there's no clutter and confusion.

#10- Creating Memories

Creating memories is the stuff that makes a great life. People will remember how you treated them and not the things you have and the titles you

created. Nobody will remember the Christmas gift you bought them three years ago. But people will remember that fun times they had with you, the laughs by the campfire, the adrenaline rush skiing together or the Easter meal you cooked with them.

This is the stuff a great life is made of.

Conclusion

Thank you for making it through to the end of *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy.* Let's hope it was informative and able to provide you with all of the tools you need to achieve emotional balance and sustainable mental health.

CBT is progressive and scientifically proven methods of helping people reach their emotional goals in a safe, secure and confidential space. CBT is an important science in modern medicine that must not be overlooked.

Many of us go through a variety of stressful events in life and more often than not, these stressful events bring about disorders that we never had in the first place. Feelings of depression, anxiety, and other disorders can be effectively treated through Cognitive Behavioral Therapy because therapists not only help patients during sessions, but they are taught survival skills to help them gain confidence, face their fears, and think positively and rationally.

The bottom line is that CBT has long-lasting and positive results that stretch out much better than medicinal approaches. Getting the right therapist who can help you and guide you along the way to ultimate happiness is an essential key to emotional balance.

Always remember to seek advice from experts and professionals in your area or from friends and family that you are comfortable with. A little help goes a long way.

Finally, if you found this book useful in any way, a review on Amazon is always appreciated!